

FATIMA

The Lady of the Light

BY

Mohammad Ali Al-Haj Salmin.

B. Litt, M.S.P. (London).

With An Introduction

by

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad.

And Foreword

By

Dr. Khalid Sheldrake.

1939.

FATIMA THE LADY OF THE LIGHT.

A detailed account of the life of the most esteemed daughter of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (on whom be peace and blessings of Allah). This book is the first and foremost on the subject in the English literature. The sources from which this book is compiled, are the most authoritative historical books. Some references have also been taken from the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet.

A short bibliography is also given at the end of this book.

BY:

Mohammad Ali Al-Haj Salmin.
B. Litt ; M.S.P. (London)

1939.

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مدح حضرت خاتون جنت

(از عالی جناب مید انجوں حسین صاحب آرزو لکھنؤ)

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انسیئہ حورا کسی یہ جائے ولادت ہے
کیا مصحف ذاتق کی - پاکیزہ یہ صورت ہے
اک حجت حق خود بھی - جس کی ہواں آیت ہے
تسلیم کی خوگر کو - خدمت ہی سے عظمت ہے
یہ خادمہ باری - بخدمومنہ امت ہے
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تمہارے بہ ادب آکر وہ دامن معصومہ^۳
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فضح سے ذرا پوچھو - جو حاضر خدمت ہے

جبویل قسم کھالین - خود وحی الہی کی
کس سوکے لئے چادر - تطہیر کی آیت ہے
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بیتی ہے پیغمبر کی - مان گبارہ اماموں کی
اس عطرو نبوت میں - خوشبوئے امامت ہے
اے آرزو آنکھیں ہیں - خورشید کی بھی خیدہ
ہاں نور جلالت ہی - خود حاجب صورت ہے



19-A, Ballygange Circulate Road,

December 3, 1938

CALCUTTA.

Dear Dr. Salmin,

I am in receipt of your new work about Hazrat Fatima. I thank you for the same. Your attempt in compiling and publishing such literature is very laudable, and I hope it will be appreciated and welcomed by the public.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) A. K. AZAD.

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BOMBAY. India.

July 4th, 1934.

FORWORD.

It is with the greatest happiness that I heartily recommend to the peoples of the world the book of that gifted author who has once again given us an intellectual and spiritual work which can inspire every day of our lives to realize that we can emulate with profit the heroes and heroines of Asia. Dr. Muhammad Ali Al-Haj Salmin scarcely needs introduction, but I may say that I have been happy to have been in close contact with him for some years, and every thing from his talented pen is read eagerly by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He is a sincere man, and that is everything. Sincerity is the one bright jewel which shines in a world of hypocrisy.

"Fatimah: The Lady of the Light," is, alas, too little known to the peoples of the Western Continents, and in placing before us for the first time a book in the world's universal language—English, he has won distinction in presenting a character unique in history to all who value a blameless and pure life. It is no easy task to chronicle the life of the daughter of the Last of the Prophets of Humanity. Today the women of the world seek inspiration, and this can be found in the wonderful life of Fatimah. We see her as daughter, as wife, as mother, and the more we read the greater our admiration.

Asia is a wonderful Continent, and has given much towards the advancement of the world, but, alas, her personalities are rarely known, except to scholars. I feel confident that much bitterness could be avoided, much misunderstanding removed, if only the West could read and understand the greatness of those in Asia who helped to build up our modern civilisation, and who thus contributed their share to the intellectual advancement of humanity. It is my fervent hope that one day the West may acknowledge fully the debt it owes to Asia, and that Asia and Europe will join hands in one great fraternity.

I would request the reader not to read this book except in the most careful and understanding manner. It is the record of a WOMAN who profoundly influenced the lives of Millions throughout centuries, and in her life, we have a glimpse of the mind and character of the last Prophet sent for the guidance of this world. We also read in the book something of the life of Muhammad himself, and can understand the atmosphere which surrounded Fatimah, and which brought out and developed in her the finest spiritual forces.

Arabia is but a land of dreams to many, but to the 40,00,00,000 of Muslims it is the centre of all things. Here in Arabia is the City of Mecca, and five times a day in North, South, East and West, millions turn their faces in prayer to this sacred spot. Circles of prayer are thus formed which ring our planet in spiritual outpouring of the soul. It was here, in Arabia, that a Voice called to humanity to cease from strife, to come together as one family, and to eliminate poverty with all its attendant evils. Unity of the Deity and Unity of Humanity. This is the keynote of the religion which is styled: "Islam," and which is today conquering Africa and has no less than 7,000,000 adherents in Europe. We must, therefore, give our serious attention to the great ones of Islam, and then perhaps, can understand the real position of woman and man today.

If the men of the world want to follow a most glorious example, then let them follow Muhammad, and the women of the world have a perfect pattern in Fatimah, of ever-blessed memory, whom we call "The Lady of the Light".

KHALID SHELDRAKE.

Life President : "The Western Islamic Association."

LONDON.



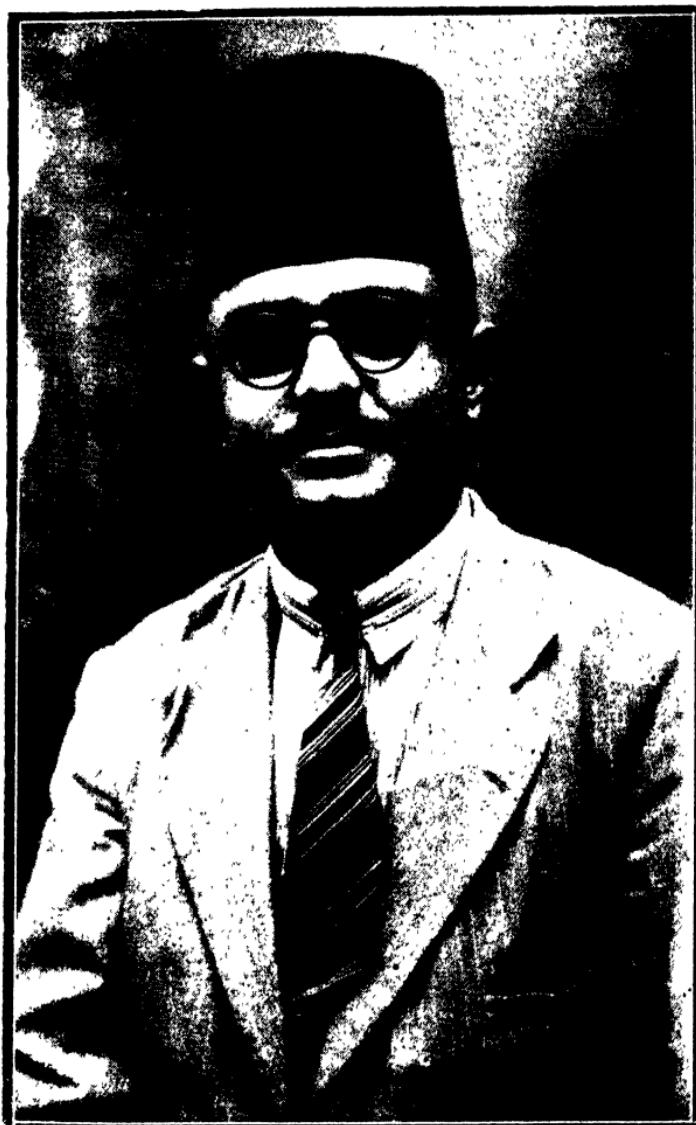
In
The Holy Memory
of
FATIMA

the Esteemed daughter of
The Holy Prophet
MOHAMMAD.

صلى الله عليه وآلـه وسـلم



محمد على الحاج سالمين



Mohammad Ali Al-Haj Salmin.

P R E F A C E .

I feel it a great pride to pen a few lines for a Book on 'Lady Fatima' by an Arab Mujahid Al-Haj Salmin, the pioneer of English Literature on the philosophy of the 'House of Mohammad' (May peace of God be on them). In these days of materialism when womanhood has run amuck and the Modern Eve is proving herself the sole cause of social troubles, it is the duty of all descendants of Lady Fatima to flood the market with a literature which may throw light on the real character and life of this Light of Female world. Muslim womanhood should be in the field to show to the world this ideal pattern of conduct, an embodiment of virtue, truth and modesty, called El-Fatima. Leading literary men of the East and West are in search of an Ideal Lady character so that the modern womanhood may be saved from moral and social death by following this ideal character. Today, all men of comparative religions as well as atheists are tired of these society girls and unmarried mothers and nations of the Globe are in the grip of this modern civilization of nudity, free love and greed. Modern girls have no love for age long traditions of human society and even God knows when this Satanic civilization of the age may say goodbye to decency and morality for ever. Only our Lady Fatima can save humanity, for all national heroes are result of their motherly training and it is truism that mother's lap is the real college for the formation of man's character. No idiot can even dream of good character of a man who is tutored by a lady of ill-fame or shaky character. Hasan and Husain, (the world's greatest heroes of world's ideal Tragedy are not freaks of nature but only fruits of a best seed nourished by ideal hands and brain. No one can accept any spiritual giant from the lap of Greta Garbo or Miss Kajjan. Modern girls are generally barren and their unlucky husbands leave the world without issues and what to say of ideal issues. So long as we are blind to the spiritual side of the picture we cannot be safe from dangers of Dictators who just like Nero enjoy the slaughter of humanity for their selfish motives. You may be disgusted with this Western Imperialism and pray to God for its destruction but you cannot be out of danger unless and until you have the courage to start crusade against this so-called liberty of the age and request your womanhood to follow 'Lady Fatima', the ideal daughter of the ideal Prophet.

Can you not see with your own eyes that you are daily sinking in your morality and the age is age of Dictators like Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin. But neither in the East nor in the West you hear about birth of any Moinuddin, Kabir, Nanak, Rumi and Hafiz. Spiritual giants are exception to the age and materialistic political robbers, the so-called diplomats, are actors on the stage. You will read with your own eyes how the only daughter of the Last Prophet grinded the flour with her own hands and shared work with her female servants and then nursed her sons with a motherly love. The result was that this family of humble means and of no pomp and show of materialism became the spiritual

sun of spiritual system of the world. Her marriage with Lord Ali is another landmark in the social history of humanity. She too was a lady of flesh and spirit and her beauty and accomplishments were second to none in comparison to families of Prophets of old. But she did not marry as a profession and did not select her husband for any wordly motive. Her choice was the best choice. Millionaires of Arabia as well as Leaders of different tribes approached the Prophet for this choicest gift of Heaven. But what was the result? Our Prophet did not care a bit for wordly things and selected his son-in-law, our Lord Ali, who was only an ordinary labourer in the eyes of the world but the vice-regent of God on this earth- a young man with ideal character and humble means. Lady Fatima certainly could object to the selection but she seconded her father seeing Lord Ali as the ideal bridegroom. Sorry to note that in these days daughters of this ideal Lady marry even non-Sayyids for wordly motives and parents of Muslim girls select their sons-in-law, only those who are moral lepers but have fabulous wealth and can afford a car, a bungalow and liveried servants. The result is that issues are generally best statesmen of the age or traders or showmen but know nothing about religion and no man can differentiate between a Muslim and a Christian seeing dress, etiquette and mode of living. Can such families ever dream of patterns of Zainab Ummi-Kulsum and Sukaina? These things are not for Muslims only, for all literary men with spiritual background admit the force of my arguments and advocate this truth that in selection of a son-in-law, parents must see first the character of a young man and the girl. It will be wise to select the man and not the beast with label of rationality. Wealth is like a shadow and only character pays. If you wish your children to be ideal ones, then educate your womanhood in the light of philosophy of Lady Fatima. Then and then only you will be lucky to be parents of heroes and not criminals.

With these few points I request you to read the following letter of an educated lady and see how Western as well as Eastern society is crying for a copy of a book on 'Lady Fatima'. A friend of mine who is distributing literature in European circles received the following letter which is self-explanatory.

"I would ask you to convey my special thanks to our Brother S. Tasadaq Husain, B.A., (She refers to my literature) for his courage in the way he wrote. Our sisters must gain from his article.....May God reward him and say that you have not attempted your sacred venture in vain, for I accept your help and am even willing to learn and will even try to be like Lady Fatima.....I would like to learn more of Fatima."

(Mrs. E. W. Wilkins of Australia)

S. Tasadaq Husain, B.A.

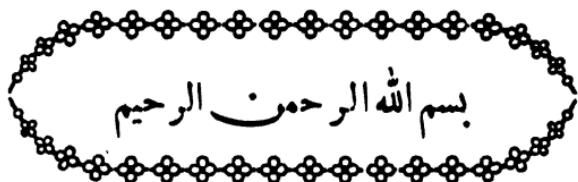
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FATIMA--THE LADY OF THE LIGHT

Part I

INTRODUCTORY.

THIS book has been written to fill up a great gap in the series of books, written on Islam. I have come across a number of good books on the life of the Holy Prophet Mohammad; there are books of history, travel, or biography in which the lives of other great Muslim personalities are given. Except for the bare mention of her name in certain books, references etc., no full account is written of the religious, private and political life of an important personage in Muslim religion, like Fatima, the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet; she indeed played a great part in the life of the Prophet, it is through her that the progeny of the Holy Prophet continued instead of becoming extinct. Her mode of life was such that it calls for wide publicity, a model worthy to be followed by millions of Muslim women today who are in dire need of such an inspiring example.

Briefly, the life of Fatima is a cast on which any life, however humble or however great, in this modern world can be modelled to excel in those rare gifts, insight, acumen, and forethought, that help in a number of ways to build a nationhood out of a distorted and disrupted community. Her unflinching courage in the face of trials and hardships, her tact in events of great importance, her forbearance, foresight, etc., are such examples as can well be followed by many Muslim women today, whose very domestic life is a disruption and a chaos of mingled threats, heartbreaks and failures. She teaches, above all other things, how to be a perfect wife and true mother. The position of many Muslim wives and mothers is lamentable today, their lives are not sheltered and protected as were the lives of former Muslim ladies. The sanctity of womanhood, the security of wifehood and such, seem to belong to the past, because, in most cases, our men have fallen into evil ways. Strangled sighs and silent tears are not the remedy for such a sad state of affairs, but a brave facing of facts is needed, if Muslim women study the life of Fatima enfolded in these pages and try to follow her good examples, they will improve their present state and bring true happiness into their homes.

It will be good as well if men of our faith read this and study the life of this great lady; the name given to her is most appropriate, for she truly is "Lady of the Light." It will teach them to treat their wives and mothers with more kindness and respect, it will teach them the meaning of the word 'home', and all that it stands for in the life of a nation. Wherever a true wife is, there also is her home, she may be poor

and humble, but if she is a good wife and a true mother, as Fatima was, then, be it just the sky and the stars above for her roof, the moist grass at her feet for her carpet, and perhaps just the glow-worms her light; wherever she be, there would be her home.

Man and woman have two different kinds of duty to perform, it is because they have overlooked or forgotten this, that we see so much unhappiness around us. The man is the doer and defender, it is his place to protect his womanfolk from all harm; it falls to his lot to fight and conquer whenever required but a woman's duty is different; it is for her to rule and decide, to order and arrange. The woman should be enduringly and incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise, not for self-development, but for self-renunciation; wise, not that she may set herself above her husband, but that she may be able to help him whenever he needs her help. In short she should be '*La-dona-e-mobile*' and not '*Quail pium al vente*'. In Fatima you find all these qualities and more, and that is why her married life with Ali was very happy. Today men and women marry without understanding the true meaning of the word marriage. In many cases it is nothing but an arrangement for the satisfaction of lust; very few indeed marry for the true reason as God meant it. The fact that woman influence has a great deal to do with the future generation is hardly recognised today and the result is that each successive generation is becoming worse and more immoral than the previous one.

The life of Fatima is the life of a true good woman; she has set an example that should be followed by all women. That it should help to elevate their lot, is one

of the reasons that these pages are written. The reader will find as he or she proceeds from page to page that the life of Fatima fulfils all conditions that are necessary today to bring the Muslim community back to some resemblance of past glory.

One very important fact that needs a great deal of stress, is the influence of women on the characters of men. It is an undeniable fact that the making of man depends entirely on woman; to begin with she brings him into the world; all through his babyhood and childhood he is under her care. It is her precious duty to mould his character as she wills. Isn't it, therefore, very necessary that she should be in a position to impart to her child all that is really required of her? A bad woman cannot help bringing up her child in a bad way. But how many good women are just careless? They do not realise their great responsibility. They leave their children to the care of servants who neglect them and lead them into bad ways. A true mother will bring up and guide her son in the right way, and he in his turn, when he has grown to manhood, will not throw away his love on an unworthy woman, but will select for his mate a good woman—one who will be worthy to take his mother's place; and she in her turn will bear good sons, such sons as will be a joy to their parents and a pride to their nation. Here I add a few words of advice to men, to bring out all the good qualities there are in a woman. It is essential that she should be kept happy and free from unnecessary troubles. A happy woman, however plain she is, always has a certain loveliness; happiness is the greatest beauty aid for a woman. Anything to check her instinct, any restraint

on her womanly functions will, in some way, mar her nature and make her unfit for the important duty she was created to perform. The great English author, Ruskin, writes : " The perfect loveliness of a woman's countenance can only consist in that majestic peace, which is founded in the memory of happy and well spent years—full of sweet records." It is, therefore, of great importance that when a man marries, he should do his utmost to make and keep his wife happy; in everyone's life there are troubles, heartbreaks and sorrow; but if these are shared by husband and wife together, it will be found that troubles can be faced more bravely and sorrow more easily borne.

Fatima's example is before us. She lost her beloved mother at a very tender age, just at an age when a child feels the need of a mother most; and then the great risks and troubles her father had to face every day. These two were enough to have made her morose and bitter, but she was never that; although she suffered a great deal, she kept up her courage and her cheerfulness and fought bravely on, and how was she able to do this ? Simply because she was always kept happy by her loving father, and later when she married Ali, he did his utmost to make her happy. So this should be a lesson to fathers and husbands, both. Another point fathers are too often inclined, is to neglect a daughter's education in favour of son; this is a mistake, for a girl's education is as important as that of a boy. What comfort can a man have in a wife who knows nothing about anything on earth ? Every man, sometimes or other, turns to his wife for advice and help and under such circumstances, only

one gifted with a cultured and understanding mind, can act as a truly soothing agent. A woman's office is an important one; a queen she must always be, queen to all who love her, above all a queen to her husband and sons.

For many a war, and for many an injustice, women have been responsible; she may not have provoked it, but then, she did not take trouble to hinder it. There is no suffering, no misery, on earth, the guilt of which does not, in some way or other, lie with women, and then instead of trying to alleviate it with kindness and sympathy, they turn away when their help is most needed. Nothing is so good as the sight of a tender loving woman with a babe at her breast, and a power which she could wield over it and its father is purer than the air of Heaven and stronger than the seas of the earth. Yet all this is lost to-day through ignorance and carelessness.

It is well-known that the condition of the Muslim community is pitiable, but spending time and money in organising conferences, creating political leaders etc., will not help to bring about the desired change. The greatest need today is the proper upbringing and education of future mothers, in order that they should be in a position to bring up their children properly, to make them true men, loving husbands and fathers and good citizens.

The life of Fatima, therefore, should be prescribed as a course of study for everyone, so that from her life story an example can be set. If all wives and mothers try to be like her, then probably, the Muslim world will be worth its name; the hollow that it represents today can then become the reality.

A great error of the world today is false pride, and we see many Muslims steeped in it, there are some household occupations that our women regard as degrading, something they should not lower themselves to do. Little household duties done by a wife with precision, care and love, often go a long way to make the home comfortable and happy. Every woman should do and be proud to do, any menial task in her home. She is its queen, she rules it; so it is her duty to see that it is kept in perfect order, a place of joy to her children, and a haven of comfort and peace to her tired husband after a long day's work, if in hard times, she cannot afford to keep a maid or a washer-woman, she should gladly do the needful. It would not be soiling her hands; in fact she would appear a dearer queen in the eyes of her husband and all who love her. Let her set Fatima before her as a guiding personality, she will soon be able to conquer all false pride. There was not one household task that Fatima did not put her hand to.

My aim, therefore, in putting this book before the public, besides filling the gap as mentioned above, is also to educate women, because I feel this is necessary if the condition of Muslims is to be improved.

Author.

FATIMA BORN AT MECCA IN 606 A. D.

Shortly after the marriage of the Holy Prophet Mohammad with Khadija, besides the risky and threatened existence that the Prophet was living, there appeared as well a boycott of his spouse. Formerly Khadija had been most popular among all her friends, but because she had

married the Prophet without the approval of many, for in those days he was faced with many dangers and many were against him, she was cut by all those who had been dear to her. This led her into periods of great misery and grief and it was during this time that she conceived. This conception was like no ordinary conception, it was something supernatural. It is said that Christ spoke in the cradle, that also was something out of the human, and so has been the case with the conceptions, birth, childhood and rearing of all other Prophets and their progenies. There has been something supernatural and divine in everyone of them and those begotten of them. Therefore, all the miraculous happenings that attended the conception and birth of the daughter of the Holy Prophet should not be regarded incredulous, it is not so and there are historical facts to prove their genuineness.

This child that was conceived proved a great solace to the would-be mother. She helped, cheered and consoled her mother in her moods of sorrow and dejection; gradually these lapses into misery became less frequent, until Khadija was once again her old cheerful self. The Holy Prophet himself was greatly surprised to see this change in her, and she told him it was because of the child within her, then he told her it had been revealed to him that the child would be a daughter, from whom would be born the Imams, who would be the Viceregents of God on earth after him.

There are many tales regarding the conception of Fatima. I will record a few here.

One day Khadija was feeling very depressed and unhappy; the Prophet came to her to try and cheer her and together they walked in the garden. Khadija then expressed a wish; she said: "O Mohammad, I have a great desire to see and eat a fruit from Heaven." Hardly had she ceased speaking, when there appeared suddenly a golden ray of light from Heaven, and before them stood the Angel Gabriel. In one hand he carried a silver plate which contained two lovely apples, one he gave to the Prophet and the other to Khadija saying these words: "Allah has sent these. He desires you should both eat....., and a child will be conceived who will be a great solace to you both; they did as they were bidden and thus Fatima was conceived.

Ali Hamdani in his book, '*Mowaddatul Qurba*,' writes a passage to this effect: When God created Adam and Eve, they felt very proud of themselves; they imagined themselves to be the most wonderful things God had created and walked about with heads held high. One day as they were strolling about the Garden of Eden, they saw a lovely little girl picking flowers. She was clothed in tiny frail golden leaves; on her head was a crown of precious stones and in her ears glittered two dazzling jewels. Adam and Eve looked at her and then at themselves. "What right" they said "have we to have such pride, when God had created one so very lovely?" With bent heads they went to God and asked Him who the little girl was and God said, "She is Fatima who will, one day, be the daughter of the Prophet, Mohammad and the most perfect of women," 'and why

does she wear that Crown ? ' they asked, "Because she will be the queen of all women and the jewels in it represent Ali who will, one day, be her husband." replied God; "And those glittering gems in her ears ? " they again asked; "Those" said God, "are her two sons" and thus it came to pass, Fatima married Ali and bore two fine sons.

Through the saying of Imam Baker in the '*Oyoon Mojezat*', it is written that when Fatima had grown to womanhood, Ali, her husband, asked the Holy Prophet about the essence that had made her being, the Prophet replied that her essence was from his. Ali went to Fatima and told her this and she said she would explain what he meant more fully. "Ali" she said, "God created my essence before the beginning of the world, it was entrusted to a tree in Heaven, that tree since then shone like a bright star. On the Night of Exaltation when my father went up to God, he was asked to go round Heaven; when he came to the lighted tree he stopped before it and God told him to pluck a fruit from it and eat it. The Prophet did so and the essence entered into him and from him into my mother Khadija and from her into me."

Another story of the conception is thus : One day the Angel Gabriel appeared to the Holy Prophet and gave him a fruit which exhaled a most wonderful perfume. When the Prophet ate it, the scent clung around him and from him to Khadija when she conceived. For the nine months she bore Fatima, this perfume never left her until Fatima was born, then it left her and entered into Fatima and this delicious perfume never left her all the days of her life.

I think I have said enough on the conception of Fatima and I have said before what a great consolation she was to her mother during the months she was in her womb. When the time for child-birth drew nigh, Khadija felt sure that the women of Quraish would come and help her; so she sent word to them inviting them to come and help her through the ordeal. But much to her regret and surprise they refused to do so, replying that as her marriage had been celebrated without their consent, they would have nothing more to do in the matter. At this refusal of her own kindred to be near her at the hour of need, Khadija was a bit dejected, but she soon cheered up saying God would be sure to help her and it was just as she had hoped. As the time of birth drew near, the door opened and four women entered the house. Khadija at first felt frightened, but they went up to her and consoled her saying that they were heavenly bodies sent by the Almighty God to help her. At last the baby girl was born; more women then appeared bringing with them a basin full of water from the stream in Heaven and clothes, they bathed and dressed the baby and carried her to her father and then the child spoke thus: "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and my father is His True Prophet."

Thus we have before us the supernatural phenomenon that attended the birth of the child of the Prophet.



Part II.

NAMES OF FATIMA
AND THEIR MEANINGS.

Her first and chief name was Fatima and her other names were: 2 Um-mul-Hasnain, 3 Um-mul-Bustani, 4 Um-mul-Aemma, 5 Al-Batul, 6 Al-Uzra, 7 Al-Zahra, 8 Syedat-en-Nisa, 9 Afzal-en-Nisa, 10 Khair-en-Nisa, 11 Mariam-i-Kubra, 12 Ahwar-el-Ausiya, 13 Al-Mubaraka, 14 Al-Tahira, 15 Al-Maradiya, 16 Al-Muhaddisa, 17 Al-Siddiqua, and one or two others.

The reason why the name Fatima was given to her is explained by Ali Hamdani in his book "Mowaddat-el-Qurba" thus: 'When the Prophet was asked why he had named his daughter Fatima, he said, "Because God has spared her and her friends from the fires of hell." The same reason has been narrated by Ibn Hajar in his book "Sawaequl-Mohriqa."

Al-Batul means "free from menses." Ali Hamdani writes that this name was selected because Fatima never had menses as this was regarded unnecessary for the daughter of the Prophet.

Al-Zahra means something shining and beautiful. Mulla Majlisi relates on the authority of Imam Jafar Sadiq, that she was given this name because when she used to say her prayers a lovely mellow light used to emanate from her. While the author of Risala Jannat writes that because Fatima was very beautiful, the Prophet used to call her Zahra.

Al-Uzra also means something clean, pure and white and Fatima was all this and as fragrant as a rose bud.

Syedat-en-Nisa means the greatest of Ladies. Hafiz Damasqui writes that this name was given to her because she was a lady from Heaven. It is also written in the 'Zakha-er-ukba,' that once when Fatima was ill the Holy Prophet went to see her and when he asked her how she was, she answered that she was in severe pain and she was trying to bear it bravely and then the Prophet said to her, "My dearest daughter, would you be glad to hear that you are the queen of all women in the world." Thus the name Syedat-en-Nisa was given to her.

Afzal-en-Nisa and Khair-en-Nisa also mean respectively the greatest among women and most blessed among women.

Mariam-i-Kubra means 'Great Mary'. This name was given to her because she had two sons who were sacrificed in the name of Allah, while Mary, the mother of Jesus, had only one Jesus who was about to be crucified on the Cross.

Ahwar-el-Ausiya. Imam Tabri from the sayings of Jabar Ansari, in his Zakha-er-Ukba, says that very often the Holy Prophet would say that his daughter was a 'hori' among the women in the world.

Al-Mubaraka means a blessing and in all respects Fatima was a blessing to every one who came in contact with her.

Al-Siddiqa means truthful. Fatima was always truthful. Never once did she tell a falsehood in her life.

Al-Muhaddisa. This name was given to her because before she was born, she spoke to her mother from the womb and said that she was to be given that name.

All the other names that were given to her, also in some way or other, reflect some good points in her character.

Biography could never be complete, or else it would be very difficult to understand the true greatness of the character depicted, unless we begin right from the very beginning and make clear the early education, training and upbringing that moulded the child into person. It must be remembered that by education in connection with the children of Prophets, is not meant the ordinary education given to ordinary children. For instance, one day Mary spoke to Jesus thus: "I do not like you to play about all the time wasting your time, you should go to some teacher who will teach you how to read and write." Christ replied: "My God has rid me of this early education, when I was in your womb. I was not only taught all you wish me to learn but also every thing else that needs learning," but the mother still insisted and made Jesus accompany her to a renowned teacher of philosophy and religion. Everything the teacher spoke about, Christ knew and it was proved beyond doubt that the knowledge Christ possessed was much more than that of the learned teacher. This has been the case with all the chosen of God and so it was in the case of Fatima and other members of the Holy Prophet's

family. They needed no earthly tuition. Fatima was brought up by the Holy Prophet, she was reared and grew in his presence, and so naturally she was imbued, with every thing that was best.

At a very early age, Fatima lost her mother, her consoler and adviser was her father, only to him would she turn for help, and he was always kind, considerate and generous to her. Under the influence of such a being, the girl gathered only all that was best and grew up to be the finest specimen of womanhood. The Holy Prophet was always kind to Fatima, it was his nature to be kind, gentle, but in her case he was more so, because she had lost a loving mother at such a tender age, just the age when a child needs the care of a mother most.

It is always to be noticed that those whom God chooses to be great, are severely tested first before accredited, all sorrow and suffering they have to undergo. The lives of all Prophets were hard and full of trials, it was no ordinary test that these great personalities had to go through it and be realised that if these personalities had not suffered all that they did, the successes that attended their efforts would not have been so great or so lasting.

The two great influences that acted as a check on the atrocities of the Arabs were the presence of the Holy Prophet's wife and uncle, but after their death which occurred within a short time of each other, the Arabs found themselves more in a position to launch an unhindered campaign of merciless persecution of the innocent. Fatima was about five years old at that time and the

child sincerely felt the loss of her beloved mother, but knowing her father was in trouble, she did not let that fact come in the way, which she thought her duty to her father evolved on her after the death of her mother. Although bowed down with grief herself, she took upon herself the task of being his consoler; in spite of her tender years, she played the part of consoler to such perfection, that she won the praise of all around her. Those were hard days for the father and the daughter. The Holy Prophet was constantly in danger; many a time the child felt heart-broken, but she put on a brave face for the sake of her father, she devoted herself entirely to his care with such motherly love and understanding, that the Prophet hardly ever missed the effects and sweetness of home. The tale of the cruelties meted out to the Prophet and each moment of his life that was in danger was such that no other being would have borne with such cheerfulness and patience. Each time the Prophet went out, Fatima would betake herself to her room and pray to God on her bended knees for his safe return. Then the time came when the Holy Prophet had to migrate to Medina, it was not possible for him to have taken her with him. The flight was too perilous to risk her life; thus she had to be left behind at Mecca, their hearts almost broke to wish each other goodbye. It was the first time father and daughter had to be separated. The very thought that anything might happen to him and that she might never see him again, was enough to break down the courage of a grown up person, leave alone that of a mere child; but Fatima faced it bravely, she let him go with smile and head held high and thus helped the Prophet in the achievement of that which turned out to be the land mark in the history of Islam.

The history of the flight to Medina is well known to many. As I mentioned before, it was impossible for the Prophet to have taken Fatima and the other members of his household with him, he had to leave everybody behind and trust to keep them safe from the onslaught of the enemy. How he reached Medina is given in detail in other books; to dwell upon that again, now, will only increase the volume of this book. Suffice to say that after facing many dangers he reached Medina and encamped in the house of Abu Ayyub Ansari. After he had settled in Medina and all arrangements were complete, he sent his special servant Zaid alone, according to the testimony of Ibn Sa'ad; but according to the researches of Abu Rafh, he sent two servants with two camels and five hundred silver pieces to go to Mecca and fetch Fatima and the rest of his household. However, when Fatima came to Medina, she had to stay for a short time with Bibi Sawdah until the house for her, which was under construction, was ready.

It is a well known fact that the second year after the flight to Medina was considered to be the most successful year, both for Islam and the Holy Prophet, the founder of Islam. The overwhelming success at Badr under the leadership of Ali, a cousin of the Holy Prophet, against the army of the Meccan Kuffars who were well advanced in numbers, training and discipline, was the turning point in the history of Islam. The part Ali played in the successful termination of this event from the very beginning when he worked as a scout to gather

all information about the advancing enemy, to the end when he headed and commanded the Muslim force which routed the enemy, is acknowledged without doubt. The Holy Prophet was so pleased with Ali and his achievement that he always remembered him and later made him his son-in-law.

As I said before, those from God i.e. His Prophets and their families, do not need the worldly instructions that go to imbue a child with character etc. They come into the world self-taught, their manners, their language, their learning is perfect and of the highest. After the flight the Holy Prophet married Umme-Salma who says that the Prophet asked her to be a guardian and tutor to Fatima and teach her etiquette, etc., but it was soon found that Fatima needed no such coaching; in fact, Umme-Salma says that on more than one occasion Fatima came to her rescue by telling her the right thing to do or say, or the correct etiquette to adopt. (Jala-ul-Oyoon page 87).

After the above statement there remains nothing more to be said on the subject of Fatima's manners etc. Up to the time of Khadija's death, the Holy Prophet had no other wife, so when she died the child was left without that motherly affection which goes a long way to make happiness. It is said that the Prophet had two maids in the house and although they were very respectable women, they could not be regarded as fit guardians to the child of a Prophet. I will mention the maids here for it fell to their lot to attend to Fatima and make her comfortable. One had the name of "Burkata". *Allama Ibn Hajar* in his book writes that Burkata was another daughter of the Prophet.

The exact words in his book are: "The name of one daughter of the Holy Prophet is Burkata, and the other Fatima"; but apparently he finds out his error and then tries to rectify it thus: "I have mentioned above that Burkata is a daughter of the Holy Prophet, but it seems this is not so, for Burkata was the maid who attended to Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad." Later when Qasim was born this maid Burkata attended to him as well and again in this wrongly written book of Allama it is implied that she was a daughter of Qasim.

Some books say the Prophet had two maids for Fatima, while others say one. Shibli Nomani in his "Life of the Prophet" only admits of one maid attending to Fatima and says that her name was Umme-Ayman and that she was also called "Burkata".

If this, the most modern statement, could be taken as a fact, it means there was only one maid in the house of the Prophet.

For three years Burkata attended to Fatima with great care and tenderness after the death of Khadija and then the Prophet married Umme-Salma. It cannot be said that Umme-Salma gave the child all that a mother gives. Now this does not mean that she did not look after her properly. She did all that she could and did it to the best of her ability, but it did not amount to what a real mother would do for her own child. There were many others who took a great interest in the welfare of Fatima, one of them was Bint-e-Asad, the mother of Ali and the wife of Abu Talib. After the death of

the Prophet's mother, this very lady brought him up and she did it so well and with such tenderness, that the Prophet explains it in one sentence : " After my mother's death, Bint-i-Asad was my mother." So one who looked after the Prophet like a mother could have had nothing but the same motherly feeling and love towards his daughter. Another was Umme-Fazl, the wife of Abbas, it was to her care also that the bringing-up and rearing of Fatima's children fell later on. Besides these two there was the daughter of Abu-Talib, that is, the sister of Ali, she was often with Fatima, playing with her and making her happy.

Some interested writers have included the names of Aisha and Hafsa among those who acted as guardians but this could not be possible in the case of Aisha for at that time she was nothing but a child herself. In the case of Hafsa it is doubtful if she was able to see much of Fatima; the state of affairs, and the anxious times the Muslims were then passing Hafsa being outside the family of the Prophet, could not have had the opportunities to leave her own house which was some distance away, and go to that of the Prophet when it was very risky for the men to move about freely without being molested.

As it had been stated before, Fatima needed no training and education, but the mere fact that she had lost her mother, she wanted, at times, some one to turn to for love and motherly care; and these ladies mentioned above, being family members, did their best for Fatima to make up for the loss of her own mother.

Fatima as a child, was never friendly or played about much with the children of her neighbours; but this does not mean that she was unfriendly. On the contrary she was most cordial to them whenever she met them, but she did not go out of her way to seek them, although she did not mix with them freely, she was loved very dearly by all the children in the neighbourhood, when she did join them at their parties etc., they would fight among themselves to be near her.

Although Fatima was the Prophet's very dearest daughter he did not have much time to be with her; those were very busy days for him but he always made it a point of duty to spend at least a couple of hours with her daily. The time would fly all too soon, and when he was about to go, Fatima often used to beg him to take her with him. "If you cannot stay, at least take me with you for I am most happy when I am with you," she would plead.

It was thus Fatima spent her childhood, from the time of her mother's death, at the age of five, until the time she was betrothed to Ali. She had no girlhood to speak of, for she was married to Ali at the early age of fifteen.



Part III.

BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE OF
FATIMA

THE story of the betrothal of Fatima to Ali is related by Majleesi in his book, *Munaqib*, as follows:

When Fatima reached the age of puberty, the great and the wealthy of Quraish and others possessing land and money, each one in turn, approached the Holy Prophet and asked him to give Fatima to him in marriage, but all of them the Prophet refused and turned away in a manner which showed apparent disapproval.

Abu Bakr was also one of those who asked for the hand of Fatima, but was rejected in the same way. One day, all those whose suit had been rejected, met and talked about the matter among themselves; after a good deal of discussion, they came to the conclusion that the Prophet seemed to favour Ali most; so perhaps he wanted Ali to marry his daughter. They were aware that Ali had not approached the Prophet on the matter, so they decided to go to him and ask him to go to the Prophet and claim the hand of Fatima. When Ali heard what these men had to say to him, his heart leapt with joy, but he replied sadly, that, although he had wanted to, he had not dared to approach the Prophet on the subject as he was a poor man compared to all the rest who wanted to marry Fatima; so he intended waiting until he had enough to support a wife! But they told him they were prepared to help him and that he need not wait on that score. He took courage and went to seek the Prophet.

The Prophet at that time was in the house of Umm-e-Salma, his second wife. Ali was admitted; he went in and sat down with bent head; the Prophet entered and seeing him thus asked what the matter was. Ali after telling the benefits and kindness he had derived from the Prophet from childhood, begged to be accepted for the hand of Fatima. The Prophet readily accepted him and told him that only a little while before, he had been informed by Allah that the match between Fatima and Ali had been made in Heaven.

After a few words of advice, the Prophet asked Ali to go to the mosque and he would follow him presently and publicly announce the betrothal. A few people had already gathered when the Prophet entered the mosque, his face aglow with pleasure; he asked Bilal to go up on the minaret and call out to all to gather round. In a very short time a large number of people had gathered. The Prophet climbed the pulpit and delivered a sermon extolling the goodness of Ali, after which he announced Ali's engagement to Fatima.

It is said that Ali sold his armour, one of his three possessions in the world, besides his sword and camel and with the money he bought necessary things for his home.

Anas relates the incident of the betrothal like this. He says: The Angel Gabriel came and spoke to the Holy Prophet and handed him a parchment on which were written two lines; the Prophet asked what the two lines meant and Gabriel replied they meant that God had ordained that Fatima should be married to Ali.

Abu Bakr Khwarzami writes: "One day the Prophet came out of his house, his face was shining bright like the full moon. Abd-er-Rehman, observing this asked the Prophet the reason for such great happiness depicted on his face. To which the Prophet replied that he was feeling happy because he had received from God very good news, i. e., that God had betrothed Fatima to Ali.

In the "Kitab Noor-ul-Absar" it is written by Imam Sheblangi from the tradition that Anas was present when a revelation came to the Prophet. When the Prophet was normal once again, Anas asked him what the message was and the Prophet replied that God had ordered him to announce the betrothal of Ali to Fatima and that their marriage was to take place at the same time. The Prophet then asked Anas to go and call Abu Bakr, Usman, Talha, Zubair and the same number of Medinites. When they had all arrived the Prophet delivered an address and announced that according to the orders received from God, he was going to marry Fatima to Ali without delay. The same is related by Tubri in his "Zakhair-e-Uqba". Thus it came to pass that Fatima was betrothed and married at the same time to a man who was, as I will mention below, the right mate for the daughter of the Prophet.

After the marriage, Fatima did not accompany Ali to his house; she went back to the Prophet, but I will come to that later.

ALI.

It will not be out of place here to mention something about the man Fatima married. He was a cousin of the Prophet and the fact that he was the most brave soldier and the most respected in the house of the Prophet of Allah. It is essential to know, besides the tie of relationship, what special relations Ali had with the Prophet. The Prophet himself had said: "the greatest tie between myself and Ali is this: he and I have been created from the same essence and both of us prayed on the right hand of the Throne of the Almighty before anything else was created in this world. This essence, according to the writing of Ibn Magazi, was transmitted from one generation to another, until it reached Abdul Muttalib; then it was divided into two, and transmitted into the two brothers, Abdulla and Abu Talib, who each had a son, Mohammad and Ali. Mohammad bin Mahmood writes that when the Prophet went to see Ali on the day of his birth, Ali saluted him and started reciting the Holy Quran, although it had not till then been revealed. Ali was the only personage to be born in the sacred precincts of Kaba.

From the age of six the Prophet played a great part in the upbringing of Ali; in fact from that age the boy had always been with the Prophet. Naturally the child grew in an atmosphere that helped him to imbibe many of the qualities of the Prophet. Ali was one of the first to become a Muslim. There never was any need to preach Islam to him, he knew all that there was to know. Others had to be taught the tenets of Islam, its truths and so on before they could be converted but this was not so in the case of Ali.

History of Tabari, volume 2 at page 211, it is clearly written that on a Monday the Holy Prophet proclaimed his mission and that on Tuesday Ali said his prayers with him. Therefore it is but an undeniable fact, that he was not one of the first but the very first to become a Muslim.

The excuses offered by many that Ali could not have been the first Muslim, because at that time he was only 13 years and as such it could not be regarded that he was mentally able to fully realise the significance of taking a new faith; but this cannot be a sound argument for if there had been any doubt of Ali's ability to know what he was about, the Prophet would have been the first to defer until he was older.

The very fact that the Prophet had no objection whatever to Ali becoming a Muslim when he wanted to, shows that he knew that although of a tender age, he was quite capable of knowing what he was about. Under the guidance of the Prophet, Ali had grown into a good brave man, they were very fond of each other and the relation between the two was such that if the Prophet had married Fatima to anyone else, it would have come as a great surprise to everybody.

Part IV.

FATIMA GOES TO HER NEW HOME.

IN the previous chapter I stated that after the marriage Fatima did not accompany Ali, but went back to her father's home. A whole month had passed since the marriage, so the ladies of the household thought it was time to send her to her husband; they told the Prophet about it. At first he was down-hearted at the thought of Fatima leaving his roof so soon, but he realised it was his duty to send her to her husband. He then sent for Ali and informed him that he would be allowed to take Fatima to his home that night. Having done that, he asked Bilal to have one of the goats killed and to get extra things from the bazaar as he was going to give a feast that night. It is said that the meals cooked would not have ordinarily sufficed for 50 people, but that almost the whole of the male and female population came and ate and yet there was a great deal left over.

When the feast was over, the Prophet went indoors and asked Ali to follow him. Then he called Fatima and taking her by the hand, gave her to Ali and told him to take her to her new home. The happy bridegroom led off his bride in the midst of a long procession of most delighted people who saw the matrimony ending in its brightest culmination of the happiest union of two great souls and a great procession was formed and everyone was delighted to see the culmination. There were numerous pretty young girls too, lined up along either side of the road with delicate, wicker baskets full of rose buds in their hands with which they covered the bridal path of the divine pair.

Imam Hamdani in his book "Isteeab" writes that the Holy Prophet was the only one who accompanied them right up to their home and after he had taken his departure, Ali turned towards his bride and started talking to her of their future life together. To which, for a while Fatima listened, and then started crying. Ali felt a bit upset and asked her gently, "Aye Queen of all women, why do you cry at this moment? "Are you not glad that I am your husband? " Fatima retorted "no, no, I am indeed glad you are my husband, because you are up to my expectations, but what worries me is the thought as to what would be my condition at the time of my death, at the time when my body will be lowered in the grave; therefore I want you now to show me the place where you always say your prayers and join me in saying some prayers now." Ali took her to the place and they started praying together. For three whole days they prayed thus, after which they returned hand in hand to the normal affairs of life.

Nobody can have anything to say against the Prophet, for having given his daughter to Ali in marriage. Not only was it his dearest wish, but it was also ordained by God. The things, therefore, that are said against this marriage, can be nothing but fabrication on the part of those who were jealous, because Ali had thus triumphed over them.

Whatever may be said, their marriage was a very happy one. During the first few months, people tried to make mischief between them by telling Fatima tales against Ali. In the beginning, being a mere child, she complained to the Prophet on one or two occasions, of

what the neighbours were saying about Ali. But when the Holy Prophet told her of all the good points and excellent qualities in Ali, she soon realised the truth; she never again doubted Ali and never bothered to listen or believe anything the neighbours had to say.

And as time went on, Ali proved to be the best of husbands, kind, considerate, solicitous and loving. There was no task, however hard, that he was not prepared to accomplish to make Fatima happy. On the other hand, Fatima was also the very best of wives, kind, loving, generous, always a help and comfort. Their years together were perfect; all trials and sorrows they bore together, all joy they shared together. Some time after her death, someone asked Ali about his life with Fatima; at first he was unable to speak, and then he replied in a few words: "I thank God that not once did I give her any occasion to be grieved, and on her part, not once did she make me angry or give me cause for grief, never did she go against what she knew to be my tastes, principles and ways; whenever I was sad or depressed, just at the sight of her all my sorrow would vanish. She was ever ready to grieve with me or laugh with me as the case may be."



The Holy Prophet said, "Fatima is a part and parcel of my heart.
He who displeased her displeased me."
(Muslim.)

Part V.

FATIMA'S MARRIED LIFE.

It is a fact that new life opens out for a girl after marriage; her old life is left behind her completely. Once married, she has the freedom of her new home, she makes new friends, cultivates new pleasures etc. Yet the young bride is subjected to severe observation with the only aim of finding fault with her ways and behaviour etc.; in most cases the bride goes to a home which she has to share with a mother-in-law, and sometimes sister-in-law, these in-laws usually treat the poor new entrant with hostility; nothing that she does, will satisfy them. They find fault with everything she does, however well she may have done it. They scold and nag her and call her a "good for nothing" when her husband is not about, and almost always the young bride is too frightened to complain to her husband of the treatment meted out to her. She usually has to smile and bear it, perhaps, if she did complain, it would not help matters much; for usually in such cases the mother's word is law, and the son dare not say anything to displease her. But with Fatima it was not so, when she married and went to her husband's home, she found that his mother was living with him and she and her mother-in-law pulled on very well together. The old lady died two years after the marriage and those two years spent with her son and his wife were very happy ones for her. There was absolutely nothing to suggest that Fatima and the old lady did not agree, or that the relations between them were in any way strained. Fatima would not let her mother-in-law do any house-

hold duty, but she herself did all she could to make her comfortable. Ali often would say, "my wife and mother are like a loving mother and daughter."

The household duties that Fatima was called upon to do in her married life, were simple and primitive. Ali was not a well-to-do man, and in the beginning, Fatima had to do all the work herself. Those days were not the days of false pride, when to do one's own work was considered something most degrading. To-day if a man brings home his daily requirements from the market, all the neighbours around, will be startled and throw up their hands in horror ; how their tongues will wag and the unkind things they will say—"look at that, isn't he mean and stingy—can't keep a servant" and so on. They will not think that perhaps the poor man is in difficulty, and is really hard up. Similarly in the case of a woman, if she is seen doing her own grinding, or sweeping her house, she too is severely criticised, and the busy-bodies will say ; "I shall not notice her in future, if she can do all that; surely she comes from a very low stock."

Therefore it is seen, we are not considered respectable in these days if we ourselves attend to all duties of the house. This outlook of false pomp and silly greatness came into the Muslim world with the beginning of the Ummayyad and Abbaside caliphs. From that time one's respectability began to be gauged in terms of money one possessed. To-day a man may be an out and out scoundrel, one of the greatest black-guards on this earth, not fit even to look upon decent people, but if he has money and lands, gorgeous houses and the latest

in motor-cars, of course, then he is considered 'respectable'; he is sought after by all, made a great fuss of, his smiling countenance appears in numerous papers, "The charming Mr. So-and-so!" and why? Just because he is wealthy. Now, in comparison, take the case of a poor man, he may be good and honest, interfering with no one, harming no one, working hard from morn till night to bring in a few rupees. He is thin and bent, his face is drawn with worries, and everybody shuns him, nobody holds out a friendly hand, or gives him one cheery word. Why? because he is poor. He may have seen better days, but that is not thought of. His former friends, being in good positions themselves, when they meet him, avoid him with words like this: 'there comes so-and-so, don't let him see us, bah! look at his clothes, how shabby! This is the state of the world to-day, false pride on all sides, men seem to have made money their God, the alarming dimensions which this false pride has reached has become an awful canker in the world to-day.

In the beginning of Islam, life was simple. Pride was there, but true pride, that of righteousness, where no work whatever was considered derogatory.

To go back to Fatima's married life, I have previously mentioned that, in the beginning Fatima used to do all her own household work, when Ali had the time he often helped her, and it is said, that on many occasions, the Holy Prophet himself came and helped her; this should be a lesson to fathers and husbands, if you have nothing special to do, and you see your womenfolk working hard, you should always go and help them.

Part VI.

FATIMA'S TREATMENT WITH HER MAID SERVANT
AND HER RELATION WITH ALI.

LATER on, the Holy Prophet gave Fatima a maid to help her in the work. Now, this is another point of importance; the treatment that was accorded to this maid was most exceptional one which is hardly to be expected to-day in this materialistic world. To-day when a man employs a servant, he exacts as much work out of him as possible, his idea being that he is paying the servant and so he should do all that he is told to do. From early morning, he is working till late at night and when at last he is given permission to retire, he is as tired as a horse that has been on the trod all day. Nothing but downright cruelty. These sorts of things usually happen in cases when three or four servants can easily be employed, but, of course, the man thinks it is much more saving to have only one servant, making him do all the work. Another fact most apparent nowadays, is the treatment meted out to servants; they are not treated like human beings at all, but rather they are treated more like beasts of burden. They are sworn and nagged at and at times kicked and the poor devils suffer in silence for the sake of the paltry pay that they get. I will now relate one of my experiences on this subject. My wife and I paid a visit to a wealthy woman whom we had known for about two years. As it was a fine evening, we preferred to walk the ten minutes' distance from our place to hers. As we entered the drive, I noticed a bent old man working amongst the flower-beds. To me he seemed too old to work. This lady, we will call her Mrs. X, kept us some

little time waiting, but we did not mind it as we were kept highly amused at the antics of her pet monkey, a horrible ugly little beast, that had been let loose in the drawing-room. It was his great delight to pull about the satin cushions and disturb the ornaments on the table. We tried to stop him, but it was of no use; he just perched himself on the mantelpiece and gibbed at us. Mrs. X came in; she did not mind at all seeing the room in such disorder. After shaking hands with us, she picked up the little beast, embraced and kissed it and called it all sorts of silly names and for the next fifteen minutes we had to listen to all the wonderful things Kongo did. I was most decidedly getting bored; it was all I could do to stifle a yawn. Just then the old man I spoke about, passed the window. In an instant Mrs. X seemed to have forgotten us, she went to the window and the way she abused the old man was most shocking; and he, poor chap, just looked pleadingly at her, with eyes that reminded one of the eyes of a whipped dog. Mrs. X then turned to us with a most bewitching smile and said: "I am so sorry I lost my temper before you, but that man is most annoying; my man is sick and I engaged him at the rate of 4 annas a day just to attend to the garden and water it; he is so slow, he is not going to get a pie from me to-day." With these words she sat down picking up the monkey as she did so and for the rest of the half hour that we were there, she fed that wretched monkey on tea, cakes and biscuits and I am absolutely certain if that poor half-starved old man had begged her for a crust she would have refused him.

Just one more incident I will relate here. If I wrote of all the sad experiences I have had relating to this subject, it would be another book in itself, so this one

more will suffice for the purpose. Some time ago, I had to go to a certain small town on business; a certain old friend lived there and he insisted that I should spend my two days there with him. It happened to be a time of famine, hundreds of starving men and women from the surrounding villages would come into the town begging for work or food. The second morning I was there, my friend, we'll call him Mr. X, and I were talking, sitting on the verandah, when a villager came up and begged to work. My friend told him to clean up the whole compound (which was fairly large) and he would give him a few annas for it; the man readily agreed. I had noticed the man looked famished, so throwing him a 4 annas piece, all the change I happened to have with me, I said, "let the poor man go and get some food, he is almost fainting and will never be able to work in that condition". As the man moved off, Mr. X said: "You should't have given him that, you will never see him again now; but he was mistaken; in 10 minutes the man returned. That evening I returned rather late and I was just dressing at about 7 p.m. when I heard Mr. X's voice in the compound, "Get out you badmash before I kick you out" he shouted, "I have given you more than you deserve". In fact he had given him only $\frac{1}{4}$ th what he promised and the compound had been done remarkably well, I dressed and went down but the poor man had gone. That night we dined at an expensive restaurant and Mr. X spent money freely, the tip he gave a well-fed waiter as we left, would have fed the poor villager and his family for at least a fortnight. Now this sort of behaviour was unknown in the early

days of Islam. The great thing was the spirit of the brother-hood, where all were equal, where feelings, emotions and sentiments were considered. Take the example, for instance, of the Holy Prophet and Fatima: the Prophet was always kind and considerate to his servants and so was Fatima. If the maid did the grinding one day, Fatima would insist on doing it the next, she shared the work equally with her. One day Sulman went to see her; he found her sweeping the floor, although she was looking tired. So he asked her if she did not keep a servant, she answered she had a servant, but she did the sweeping yesterday, and, therefore, it was her turn to-day. This maid worked for Fatima for many many years, she loved her very dearly. It is said that if Fatima any time got ill the maid would shed tears and refuse to leave her bedside. If Fatima went out and bought any thing for herself, she would always buy some little gift for her maid as well. If the maid ever did any thing wrong, Fatima would not scold her or get annoyed, she would show her the right way and tell her to do it like that in future. This should be taken as an example. People nowadays are apt to treat servants more like beasts than human beings. They seem to forget that they have feelings as well and are likely to hurt just as others do.

I stated before that some people tried to make mischief between Fatima and Ali, by spreading false rumours, concerning their married life; most of these mischief makers were the ones who had proposed for Fatima and had been refused by the Holy Prophet; so they thought they would avenge themselves by spreading tales about

them. Some said that Fatima and Ali were very unhappy together: others said that Ali made Fatima very unhappy; some even went so far as to say that although the Prophet would not accept any of them, he gave Fatima to Ali without Ali having asked for her hand. Some-how or other the Prophet got to hear of this last rumour. And he announced to all that it was untrue. Ali had also proposed for Fatima, the marriage, besides being his dearest wish, was also an arrangement made by God.

Many other things they said and tried to make out that Ali was not the best of husbands. After some time they tried another line of attack. They said that Ali intended taking another wife and that he had already proposed for the hand of Abu Jahal's daughter. This is also found in one of the Shia books. Someone, I believe, went and told Fatima that Ali wished to marry Abu Jahal's daughter and had already asked for her hand and was likely to be accepted. Fatima refused to believe it at first, but the man who told her this, swore it was a fact. This grieved Fatima, for she had done her best to make Ali happy and had felt sure Ali was content with her and did not wish for another wife. Ali was out and she spent a miserable day. In the evening she went to see the Prophet and to tell him about it.

Soon after she had left the house Ali returned. Finding that Fatima was not there and as there was nothing else to do, he betook himself to the mosque. He was feeling very tired, so after saying some prayers he lay down to rest.

In the meanwhile, the Holy Prophet did all he could to pacify Fatima, but it was of no avail. In the end he accompanied her back to her house, intending to question Ali and set matters right. On reaching the house, the maid informed them that Ali had gone to the mosque, so they proceeded there. On reaching there, the Prophet asked Bilal to go and call the person who had told Fatima the tale, also a few others, and bring them to him soon. When they reached the mosque they found Ali resting, the Prophet went up to him and said: "Ali, do you not know that one who pains Fatima pains me and one who annoys her annoys me", and Ali answered that he knew it. Whereupon the Prophet retorted, "why then have you proposed for the hand of Abu Jahal's daughter"? Ali was greatly surprised when he heard this. He swore that he had not done such a thing and such a thought had never once entered his head; he said that he cared very greatly for Fatima and that he would never marry again as long as she was alive. Fatima then felt rather ashamed of herself for having doubted Ali even for a minute, but Ali told her not to worry about it and together they went back home quite happy. Then the Holy Prophet turned to the others and told them that they could see for themselves that Fatima and Ali were happy and it was time they stopped their silly rumours and trying to make mischief. They felt much ashamed of themselves and after that Ali and Fatima were left in peace.

Part VII.

FATIMA'S LOVE FOR THE HOLY PROPHET.

It will not be out of place here to mention in a short paragraph the active and dangerous life the Holy Prophet led and Fatima's great love for him.

It was in the second year of the Flight to Medina, that the Battle of Uhud took place. The battle which had been fought before that was the Battle of Badr, in which the Quraish were badly routed. The Holy Prophet and Ali were the ones always to be at the head of the Muslim army. When the Quraish were retreating after the battle of Badr, they swore that they would come back with greater force and not only would they inflict a most crushing defeat on the Muslims, but they would also take good care to avenge their dead. Thus the Prophet appointed Muslim scouts to be on the look-out all the time for the enemy. One day the scouts rushed to the Prophet and reported that they could see the Quraish advancing in great numbers to-wards Mecca. Whereupon the Prophet called all his men together and held a council of war. They decided not to wait until the Quraish army reached Mecca, but together their armies together and go forth and meet them. Thus the Quraish and the Muslim armies met at Uhud, a hilly tract near Medina.

The Prophet, like the good and gallant general that he was, first surveyed the land carefully and then placed his men at such positions that appeared best. The most important point of defence, was a clearing between

two little hillocks; from this spot it was possible for the enemy to advance upon the Muslims without being observed. To guard this spot, the Prophet set aside some of his most picked men, meaning the strongest and bravest in his armies, and ordered them to watch and guard that special spot carefully and on no account to leave their post. The armies being divided and arranged satisfactorily, they now waited for the enemy to attack.

I must now mention the comparison regarding the numbers of the two armies. To every one Muslim there were ten Quraish, and yet when the enemy attacked, the Muslims fought so well and bravely that the Quraish were taken aback and after a few attacks the Muslims managed to rout the enemy with the result that they turned and fled helter-skelter, with the Muslims behind them capturing men, women, arms and property. A complete victory would most surely have been theirs, if it wasn't for the party of men left to guard the dangerous space between the two little hills. These men seeing the flight of the enemy, thought it unnecessary to keep to their posts any longer. So they also followed in pursuit, wildly rushing forward to grasp their share of the plunder. Now, this Quraish general had his eye wide open; he happened to see these men leaving their posts and this important opening left unguarded; in a few moments he managed to muster together some men; they suddenly turned and rushed at it; the rest of the retreating army seeing this sudden fresh attack, fell back; this sudden turn of events caused such confusion and havoc amongst the troops, that the poor Muslims did not understand what was happening and just turned and ran.

One of the enemies nearest the Holy Prophet, aimed an arrow at him, which caught on the mouth and succeeded in breaking two of his teeth; this arrow came so suddenly and hit him with such force that the Prophet was knocked down. Some Muslims seeing him fall, in their desperation sent up a cry that the Prophet had fallen dead. This caused further confusion among the Muslims, believing their beloved leader to be dead, they all shouted and scattered away in all directions.

In a very short time, this news reached Medina and when Fatima heard it, she went deadly pale and reeled back with pain. Unable to bear the suspense any longer, she left everything and rushed towards the battlefield. In the meanwhile, the Muslims had discovered that the Prophet had not been killed but only wounded; so gathering their lost wits together they succeeded in driving the enemy back again. When Fatima reached the battlefield, Ali who had never left his post beside the Prophet, saw her, he rushed to her and led her to the Prophet. The sob that went up from Fatima's throat when she saw her dear father alive was full of thankfulness. The Prophet, besides the wound on his mouth, had also two other wounds on his arm and chest; these were bleeding profusely. Fatima raised her father up to tend to the wounds and Ali ran to a stream near by to get some water; together they bathed the wounds and tried their best to stop the bleeding, but wounds were so deep that the blood continued to gush; Fatima then tore a piece of silk from her garment, Ali burnt it and filled the gashes with it; only then were they able to stop the bleeding. .

By this time the enemy were completely defeated and the few that had escaped capture, had fled; the Muslims were once more victorious. The Holy Prophet although almost faint from loss of blood was very happy. This incident shows what great love Fatima had for her father; when the rumour reached her that he had been killed, she was absolutely desperate; she just left house, children, everything and rushed madly to be near him and do what she could in his hour of need. Ali, on the other hand, did not leave his post beside the Prophet. He did not budge or flinch when the enemy came tearing upon them. He knew he would never run to save his own life and leave the Prophet alone to die. The Prophet was more than a father to him and he was prepared to lay down his life for him. In fact, on many occasions in other battles, it is said Ali risked his own life to save that of the Prophet. The love and devotion that Fatima and Ali bestowed on the Prophet, had been the greatest encouragement to him during many a hard time; their trust and faith in him gave fresh courage when the world seemed dark and trials unbearable.

The bravery which Ali showed in this battle of Uhud, is well narrated by Omar who had been present also. He says: "We were on the battle-field routing the enemy, when suddenly like men possessed, they turned and rushed on us; it was then we saw the Prophet

fall; not being able to stand the onslaught we turned and ran. Ali, standing before the Prophet, brandishing his sword, checked the enemy's advance and shouted out to us not to desert the Prophet, but be brave and lay down our lives for him; this gave us fresh courage and turning we charged on the enemy."

Thus we see that the victory of Uhud was more or less due to Ali's bravery and his love for the Holy Prophet.



عن أبي الحمراء أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآلـه وسلم قال
لعلي عليه السلام : " اوتيت ثلاثة لم يوتهن احد ولا أنا اوتيت
صهراً مثلي ولم اوت مثلها زوجة و اوت حسن والحسين من
صلبك ولم اوت من صلبي مثلها ولكنكم مني و أنا منكم - "
(أخرجه أبو سعيد في شرف النبوة والدليمي في فردوس الأخبار
والإمام علي الرضا عليه السلام في مسندة)



It is reported by Abi-el Hamra that the Holy Prophet said to Ali thus:-
"Thou art given three (rare) things of which there is no parallel at all. Thou hast a father-in-law like me, but I did not get a wife like that of thine. Thou hast Hasan and Husain as thine offsprings, but I did not get. However, thou (all) art mine and I am yours (all)."

(Reported by Abu Said in his book "Sharafun Nabuwat", also by Dailami in his book "Firdawsul Akhbar" and by Imam Ali Rada in his Masnad).

Part VIII.

 THE SONS OF FATIMA
 HASAN AND HUSAIN.

JUST about a month before the Battle of Uhud took place, Fatima's first son was born. He was called Hasan and the exact date of his birth was 15th of Ramadan. He was a fine big baby and resembled Ali in features. Asma Omeis came to Ali's house when she heard of the birth and she says: "After the baby had been washed, I wrapped him in a piece of yellow cloth and took him to the Holy Prophet, who had been very busy and had not the time to come and see the child. The Prophet was most delighted with his grand child; but he did not approve of the yellow cloth I had wrapped the child in; he asked me to remove it and himself wrapped the baby in a fine piece of white cloth." When the Prophet went to see Fatima, he told her that God wished the child to be called 'Shabbar', which means the son of Aaron. "I also wish this name" said the Prophet "because Ali is to me what Aaron was to Moses!." So the child was named 'Shabbar' which in Arabic is Hasan.

No one before in Arabia had been given that name and according to the sayings of the Holy Prophet, Hasan and Husain are among the names in Heaven. Although Hasan in some ways resembled Ali, the upper part of his face was like the Prophet.

Two years after the birth of her first son, during the fourth year after the flight, Fatima's second child was born. This son the Prophet wished to be called 'Shabbir', which also was the name of the second son of Aaron. This name in Arabic is Husain. Husain, it is said, from hip downwards was very much like the Holy Prophet. Although there was joy in the heart of Fatima on the birth of her second son, there was a great deal of sorrow around on account of the tragedy which befell at Kurbala, which happened about 61 A. H. It is a well known fact among Muslims that the Holy Prophet loved his little grand-sons very very dearly.

Before I write anything furthur about Hasan and Husain I will mention here, in a few words, another matter which needs to be cleared up. A few writers say that, besides, Fatima the Prophet had two other daughters but this is a very controversial subject. Yet, if it was to be granted, the fact remains that Fatima had a distinction of her own, and it was through her that the progeny of the Prophet started, the others might have died early, or if they married, bore no children. It does not, however, seem probable that the Prophet had other daughters, because, if Fatima being a Prophet's daughter had a distinction of her own, why should not others have the same, and how is it that nothing has been written about them. In books written on the life of the Holy Prophet, Fatima is mentioned very often, we read about the Prophet's great love for her, his care for her etc., but there are no anecdotes whatever about any other. The Holy Prophet was a very just man, if he loved and cared so much for Fatima, surely he would

have been the same towards the others, and there would have been some mention of it in some books at least.

So taking all this into due consideration, I do not think that the Prophet had any other daughters. Because Fatima was the Prophet's daughter, every important act in her life had something divine about, for instance, before she was conceived in the womb of Khadija, the Angel Gabriel came and announced it, at her birth Angels appeared from Heaven; at her betrothal to Ali and at her marriage also, something divine took place and the others being the Prophet's daughters as well should have had the same things happen to them, but we do not read anything about this. All these make me feel sure that Fatima was the only daughter of the Holy Prophet.

I shall now continue about the two sons of Fatima. The great love the Prophet had for these two children is well known to all Muslims. People used to say that when the Prophet had his grand-children with him, he looked the happiest man on earth. He always kept them with him as much as possible. When Husain was about three, they started accompanying the Prophet to the Mosque. It is said that one day, after delivering a sermon, the Prophet on coming down from the pulpit, knelt and bowed down to God. Hasan who happened to be near him, climbed upon his back, the Prophet did not ask him to get off. On many occasions when the Prophet would be busy saying his prayers, both Hasan and Husain would find great delight in jumping on his back, sometimes both together, and sometimes they would take it in turns. During the prayers the

Prophet had to rise after the bow but in these instances, when the children were playing on his back, he used to remain in the bent position. The Prophet used to say that God had often revealed to him, that he was to remain on his back.

The first thing the Prophet used to do on entering Fatima's house, after the customary salutations, was to ask for the two boys and as soon as they came to him, he would hug and kiss them; but if they happened to be out, he would go out at once to fetch them. If they wished him to play with them at any time, he would at once comply with their wishes and he would not stop until they were quite satisfied of playing, only then would he leave them to attend to other things.

Mulla Husain Waezi in his 'Rozat-e-Shuhada' writes, that one day when the Holy Prophet and Fatima were out, little Husain, who was only about four years then, ran out of the house and went into an orchard and started playing about all by himself. A Jew who happened to be passing, seeing the child alone, went into the orchard and started talking to him. After a while he quietly enticed the child away and took him to his house and locked him up in a room. When Fatima returned, she asked Hasan where Husain was and he said he was playing about somewhere and would be returning soon. Fatima waited until evening and was most anxious, as it was getting dark and still there were no signs of Husain. She then asked Hasan to go out and look for his brother.

Hasan looked all over, from place to place he went, but could not find him anywhere. Every one he met he asked, but nobody seemed to know anything about Husain. Still he went on, searching every nook and corner and inquiring at every door. At last he was beginning to despair when he saw a very pretty deer grazing in a garden, as he approached, the deer looked up and Hasan was greatly astonished when it spoke to him and asked him why he was wandering about so late. Hasan then told the deer that he was looking for his little brother. The deer then said, "Hasan, your little brother has been kidnapped by a Jew called Salah-bin-Rega. He had taken him to his house and locked him up in a room." Saying this the deer disappeared before Hasan could thank him.

Hasan ran all the way to the house of the Jew and loudly knocked at the door. The Jew came out and asked him what he wanted and Hasan boldly said that he wanted his brother Husain. The Jew at first pretended he knew nothing about him and told Hasan to go away as he was very busy, but Hasan refused to do so. He stood firmly at the door and said: "Go at once and fetch my brother, otherwise I shall tell my mother and my grand-father." The Jew was so surprised at the courage of such a little boy, that he asked him who his mother was and Hasan answered "She is Fatima, the daughter of the Holy Prophet." The Jew then asked him for the name of his father and Hasan replied "Ali." Then the Jew said "And what is, the name of your grand-father?" Hasan then replied, "Don't you know, he is Mohammad, the Prophet of God"! The Jew was so impressed by

Hasan that he told him he was sorry he took his brother and that he would bring him out at once, but first he begged to be taught the article. This, Hasan, readily did and the Jew then brought Husain and together they ran home to Fatima.

On another occasion, these two children went out to play; it had become quite dark and still they had not returned. Fatima and Ali wondered what could have become of them. In despair they went to the Prophet and told him about it. The Prophet was most worried and started praying. After a while an angel appeared to him and told him that Hasan and Husain had wandered far to a lonely spot and had lost their way. They were both sitting, hungry and cold under a tree and the angel directed the Prophet to the place. The Prophet at once called Fatima and Ali and told them of the angel's visit. He and Ali then went to the place and right enough Hasan and Husain were sitting there crying. The Prophet and Ali hugged them both and carried them home ; they were not scolded for having gone so far from home and giving every body an anxious time.

The Prophet and Ali used to teach them and they proved to be most apt pupils. The Prophet often used to say that for such young boys they really grasped and understood things very quickly. When Fatima finished her work and if the children were alone, she would take some needle work and go and sit with them. Sometimes she would just watch them at their play, but very often Hasan and Husain would leave their play, sat beside her and asked her to tell them stories.

Although Ali and Fatima were not well off, those children were not deprived of anything. They might not have had fine clothes etc; but they made up for that in otherways, for instance, they were brought up with love, care and tenderness, that few children are lucky enough to have now-a-days. They were the delight and joy of their parents and their grandfather. If they were a little ill, everyone would be most anxious and would fuss over them all day. They received the best of treatment and every wish of theirs was considered. Thus having been brought up in an atmosphere of such kindness and love, they grew up to be fine tender-hearted young men, in every respect like their grand-father and their father Ali.

In comparison to the great love and tenderness that was lavished on Hasan and Husain from the day of their birth until they reached manhood, the very thought of the grim fate that attended each in later life, is enough to make all hearts break. What was destined had to be: Hasan the eldest, the favourite of the Holy Prophet, was done to death at the age of 40, by his own wife who unfortunately was led away by false promises of jewels and wealth and wordly gain and was induced to administer poison to him. Husain the younger, the beloved of Ali, was cruelly butchered on the banks of the Euphrates thirsty, hungry and abandoned, except for a handful of followers who stuck to him to the very last and were put to death in the same way.

After the death of the Holy Prophet, the chaos that resulted divided the Muslim world into many dynasties,

each at loggerheads with one another. During the time of the caliphate of Ali, *Moawiya*, a member of the Ummayyad family, was very much against him, and tried his level best to injure him; but Ali managed to retain his own. When Ali died, Hasan succeeded him and became the Caliph. The attempts of Moawiya were unabated; he and his followers gave a great deal of trouble. Hasan who was by nature very reserved and quiet, was a man who loved solitude and these attempts of Moawiya were becoming more and more disturbing. So he came to terms with Moawiya and agreed to relinquish the reins of the Government provided that Husain would succeed to the Caliphate. Moawiya agreed to this and Hasan retired in the precincts of Medina. He took up his abode near the tombs of his mother and father and grandfather, intending to spend his days there peacefully, praying and fasting. But this was not to be, Moawiya was determined to see the end of him, because he had no intention of keeping his part of the bargain. After his death he wished his son to be Caliph, and not Husain; and he knew as long as Hasan lived, there would be trouble about it. Again and again attempts were made to poison Hasan, but each time they failed. At last they thought it best to bribe his wife to kill him and it was her hand that administered the fatal dose that ended the clean life of one of the best men on earth.

This was by no means the end of the intrigues. There was yet Husain alive and about to succeed him on his death. So Moawiya decided the sooner he too was done away with as well the better. Soon after the death of

Hasan, he went about getting people to take his side by promises of riches or threats of dire consequences. He made all these promises of riches to acknowledge his son Yazeed as his successor, provincial governors whom he knew would side with Husain, were supplanted by those bought with his riches. All those whom he thought would hinder him were quietly done to death in some underhand way. In time he had a very very large number on his side. Then he was satisfied, for he knew he held absolute sway.

Moawiya then had his son Yazeed publicly accepted as the one to succeed him. When Husain heard of this, he did not say a word, although he was aware of the promise Moawiya had made to his brother Hasan.

Shortly after, Moawiya died and Yazeed succeeded him. It was a part of the duty of all Muslims to acknowledge the Caliph and take the oath of allegiance. Husain was the only one who refused to take the oath. When Yazeed heard this, he at once wrote to the governor of Medina, telling him to compel Husain to take the oath and ordered that if Husain still refused to do so, he was to be killed and his head sent to him as proof that he had been killed.

The Governor sent for Husain and placed the letter before him. Husain read the letter of Yazeed and boldly refused to do as he was bid. He said he refused to take the oath, not because he should have been the next Caliph and Yazeed had wrongly ousted him, but because Yazeed

was not a fit man for the office. He was a drunkard, debauchee and a man of loose character. If, Husain continued, Yazeed was willing to give up the Caliphate to any other deserving man, he would at once take the oath of allegiance but as long as Yazeed was Caliph, he refused to do so. The Governor knowing Husain's words to be true, had not the courage to have his head severed and send to Yazeed as he had been instructed to do.

Husain later, finding Medina an unsafe place, decided to go away to Mecca. In the meanwhile, the people of Kufa were getting tired of the tyranny of Yazeed ; they started writing letters to Husain explaining the cruel and harsh treatment meted out to them and begging him to take pity and go over there and help them in their need. One and all promised to help him to fight and to release Islam of the false Caliph who was doing so much harm to all. Men who knew the Kufians well advised Husain not to attempt the journey and tried to persuade him to the best of their ability to give up the idea and to go to Mecca as he had first decided and live in peace there. But Husain was determined to go and help the people of Kufa and turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of his followers. It is but wise to pause and say a word here in his favour lest people should think Husain's determination to go was because of the prospect and chance of his becoming Caliph. This was not so ; he did not at all wish to be Caliph. Like his brother Hasan, he too liked a quiet life, but he desired to go

because he had not the heart to refuse those who had begged his help ; also because he felt it his bounden duty to fight together with the *Kuffars* against one whose very words, acts and thoughts, were a mar and blot on the fair name of Islam and Yazeed was everything that Islam forbids a man to be. It was, therefore, natural that Husain, being a true grandson of the Holy Prophet, consented to go to the help of the people of Kufa. He, however, sent his cousin, Muslim, in advance to go and see how things really were and if the people were truly willing to render the help they had promised. When Muslim reached Kufa, he soon found out that though the people might be willing to help, they were so suppressed by the Governor that they were not in a position to give any real assistance. He not only found out all that and many other things as well, but also that Husain's life would be in great danger if he set foot there.

In the meanwhile, news of his arrival had been made known to the governor, who had been instructed by Yazeed to keep watch on Husain and his few followers, and put an end to them at the first opportunity. So the governor at once set about to put an end to Muslim. This was done so quickly and quietly that poor Muslim had not even the time to write to Husain about his investigations, before he was brutally murdered.

Husain on the other hand, waited and waited for news from Muslim Bin Aquil and not hearing from him concluded that all was well, set out, with his few followers,

on the journey to Kufa. In all, he had less than hundred followers ; he was accompanied by all his relations, both male and female, young and old. Somehow or other the governor of Kufa heard that Husain was on his way and got an army together to go out and meet him. When Husain reached the banks of the Euphrates, he was surprised to find his way barricaded by an army numbering some thousands. The Commander of the Army asked Husain for the oath of allegiance, and of course, Husain again refused. He was then told that he would be cut off from water and provisions, thinking that this would make him do as they bid. Husain still refused. As all details are not necessary here, it is sufficient to say that the enemy opened hostilities, and one by one the followers of Husain laid down their lives. On the third day Husain was killed, his head was severed and sent to Yazeed.

Before I end this chapter, I must mention here that the fate that befell Hasan and Husain was known to the Holy Prophet long ago they had been born. He also told Fatima on the day of their birth what befell them. It is, therefore, natural that such love and care was lavished on them.

PART IX.
THE PART FATIMA PLAYED
IN THE BATTLE OF AHZAB.

THIS battle which is known in Muslim history as the battle of Ahzab took place in the fifth year of the Flight. This was, so to say, the last effort on the part of the Meccans to destroy, once for all the whole of Islam, and the founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet Mohammad. This time they were careful and their preparations were big and earnest; they made up their minds that they would not be defeated again. They had also succeeded in enlisting the active help of the neighbouring clans, as well as that of the Jews. They had with them some of the picked and renowned fighters in the whole of Arabia. For many months they had been preparing for this battle and the poor Muslims in Medina were quite unaware of all this. When the time came, at the end of their long preparation they had together a very very large army. When this giant lashkar started on its march towards Medina it seemed it was bound to swoop all before it. The terrible awe and panic it caused in the villages through which it passed had never been known before. These Meccans having done all in their power to retain their religion, resorted to this, one last struggle, to put an end to Islam. They let no stone unturned in their preparations, to equip and train their men. From all outward appearances it seemed quite apparent which side was going to win. Now, besides this formidable dimensions of the enemy from within to be reckoned with the hypocrites as

they are called these were not for Islam at all but just pretended to be Muslims in order to spy on them and cause mischief. Thus we see that both, from within as well as from without, the Muslims of that day were in grave danger of being wiped out entirely.

The Muslims in Medina only heard of this advance when the enemy was quite close at hand. There was no time to get together an army and go out and meet them. So they decided the best thing to do was to dig trenches around Medina and remain within the city. Thus, when the enemy reached the outskirts of Medina, they found their way blocked, and therefore laid siege intending to starve the Muslims and thus compel them to surrender.

The Muslims themselves within the walls of Medina were absolutely frantic at this, for they were not prepared for this siege, and had not enough provisions with them to last long. It was thus God spoke in the Quran and gave courage to the Holy Prophet and his followers : "O you who believe! call to mind the favour of Allah to you when there came down upon you hosts, so we sent against them a strong wind and hosts that you saw not. When they came upon you from above you and below you, and when the eyes turned dull and the hearts rose up to the throats and you began to think diverse thoughts of Allah." (Part xxi, chapter xxxiii, Verse 9-10.)

Shibli in his 'Life of Mohammad' writes : " The enemy who numbered twenty four thousands and consis-

ted of Quraish, Arabs and Jews, divided themselves into three flanks and fell on Medina and the Muslims actually thought all was up with them. ”

The siege lasted about a month and it was the most terrible thing the Muslims ever experienced, the famine and awful sufferings that it caused was most heart-breaking. The small supply of food etc. that they had with them was soon exhausted and the people were starving ; for days in succession there used to be nothing for them to eat. One day some of the companions in desperation, went to the Holy Prophet and complained that they had been without food for days and the Prophet, to console them, had to tell them the true position with him, which was worse, for it was even a longer period than theirs, that he had not had a morsel to eat. Their state was really most pitiable, men and women were starving, and the most heart breaking sight of all was the sight of the little children crying and shrieking, clinging to their mothers' shirts and begging to be given something to eat. The heart of the Holy Prophet almost broke to see all this, but there was nothing he could do to help them. During the siege, the Prophet with only a handful of followers, encamped on the out-skirts to be ready for all dangers.

The hardships caused on account of famine were untold. As I mentioned before, starvation was the foremost factor, there was sickness as well and there was no chance of dealing with these successfully. It is said

that after a couple of weeks of the siege, when there was still some food stuff left in the city, the Holy Prophet always thought of his men as being his first consideration, if he was ever given anything edible, he would at once give it away to others and go without it himself. One day Fatima heard by accident that the Prophet, which I mentioned before had encamped near the walls of the city, had been without food for over three days. Her heart which was ever generous, felt still more when she heard this about her dear father; as soon as she heard this and as time was of great importance, she packed all there was left in the house after the morning meal and rushed forth to the Prophet and offered all that there was to him. Now it must be remembered that times were very bad on account of the hypocrites within the city. It was most dangerous for single Muslim to go about in the street; it was unsafe for even two and three to go about together, but there was grave danger if one man ventured out alone. There was always the likelihood of his being set upon and killed. In the case of women the danger was far greater, but Fatima, this brave daughter of the Prophet, knew no danger. Nothing would stop her from venturing out to the side of her father. Once she knew he needed help; so taking all she could find eatable in the house, she ran out and managed to reach her father safely.

When the Prophet saw her, he was greatly surprised and told her that she should not have risked her life by coming out and when she showed him the food he was greatly touched, but asked her to take it back and keep

it for herself and the children. This Fatima said she could not do; so after eating very little himself, he gave the rest to his companions. He then bade Fatima run home as soon as possible and asked her not to venture out again as it would cause him much worry and anxiety.

As mentioned, the siege lasted almost a month and at the end of that time Muslims were beginning to get desperate, it was then that Allah took pity on them and a most awful thunder-storm took place outside the walls of Medina; this lasted many hours and grew more and more severe that terror was struck in the hearts of the enemy. Their camels and horses took fright and fled. Their clothes and belongings were blown away, trees commenced to fall on them and when hail stones and torrents of rain descended on them, with thunder claps that were deafening and lightning that was blinding, all these were more than they could stand; they just fled, one and all, even the most brave among them, just fled and thus Islam was saved once again.

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The Prophet (on whom be peace) said to Fatima thus: "Aye Fatima ! thou art the chief of the women of the believers." (Muslim).

Bukhary relates it in these words "The Prophet said to her: The chief of the women of Paradise."

PART X.

THE DISPUTES ABOUT FADAK.

DURING the 7th year of the Flight, after many and unvarying efforts on the part of Ali, the land known as Khaiber was at last captured by the Muslims. After the capture of this place, the Prophet and his army marched towards the country known as Quraa. There had been no intention of fighting, but the Jews who inhabited this territory were, however, ready for a fight and made an attack on the approach of the Muslims. Imam Behaqui writes: "The Muslims were not ready for a fight, yet the Jews began the offensive; however, the fight began and after very little resistance the Jews surrendered and a truce was signed." (Life of Mohammad. Page 368).

This point is a great bone of contention between the two Muslim schools of thought. One school says that this was not so, but that the Jews on their own accord signed it and gave the territory known as Fadak to the Holy Prophet as a present in token of their good faith. The idea was to show that having been ceded after war, it belonged to the Muslims and not to the Holy Prophet.

The fact that this territory was given to the Prophet was never disputed during his life time, but after his death when it passed to Fatima, this dispute arose, also the fabrication that being the booty of war, it was the property of Muslims in general, and as

such it should remain so and the claim of Fatima was not valid. Soon after the death of the Prophet this property was attached and joined to the Muslim territory. There must be some reason for the justification of such a step and so it was said it was a capture as the result of war.

If this was so and if it really was the property of the nation the first caliph would not have called it the property of the Prophet. His reason why it became the property of the nation was based on a tradition; none other seems to have heard this, but he said the Prophet said that: "Prophets leave all their property as charity"

Five hundred years after this affair, the Ulemas decided that it was the love of the Caliph for the Prophet which led him to acknowledge this territory as that of the Prophet's, and to mention that tradition which was not true. Having thus started they went further and stated that it was really as the result of war that the Muslims got it and as such it was part of the Muslim territory and that the claim of Fatima was ridiculous.

The question is, if this is true, how is that the first Caliph did not say at the time when the dispute was under his consideration. The fact is he could not say so, for the simple reason that he had been a witness when this territory was given to the Prophet and there had been no war; he was not the only one but, were thousands of others who knew the true facts.

It was a lapse of 500 years and the fact that the incident was forgotten which lead others to concoct the story that it was really as the result of war that Fadak came into the Muslim possession.

This first Caliph, although he admitted that Fadak was given to the Prophet by the Jews, told this tradition that nobody except himself heard the Prophet say, because he wished to include it in the Muslim land. In the same way, Ibn Hajar on his own authority, started the tale that it had been conquered in war and was, therefore, the property of the nation; but he forgot that this tale of his reflected on the character of the first Caliph, who to the very last, asserted that it was the private property of the Prophet but it had been given to the nation because of what the Prophet had said. But Ibn Hajar from the very beginning refuses to acknowledge it as the private property of the Prophet, but treats it as that of the nation, as he said it was a war booty.

This story started by Ibn Hajar was adopted by all those who followed him and his writings were given much credence and soon became a well known historical fact.

It is a fact that a fight took place at Quraa and that it was captured, but to confuse this with Fadak and to say both were one and the same fight is simply out of the question, but this is exactly what we come across in the books written by the Muslims of the Sunni school of thought.

Samani in 'Khulasa' writes the true story and it is mentioned also in 'Fathul Bayan' by Imam Asqalani that the companions related the story of the presentation of Fadak to the Prophet by the Jews thus: The inhabitants of Fadak were Jews, when Khaiber was captured by the Muslims, the Jews of Fadak sent word to the Prophet that they would give over the land to him if they were not molested. The Prophet said he had no intention of molesting them, but the Jews replied they would give him the land as a token of good faith.

Muhaddis Sheerazi in his famous book 'Rozat-el-Ahbab' writes to the same effect. These mentioned above were written by famous writers and clearly show that the three events that took place about the same time, took place separately, one after the other, and Fadak should not be mixed up with them, and taken to be as well as the result of war. To confuse one with the other and to attempt to show that they were one and the same, is nothing short of distortion of facts and all this for what end? Only to say that there was a fight as a result of which the territory came into Muslim possession.

It has been proved that it was really the private property of the Holy Prophet and when the revelation that 'Then give to the near of kin his due.....' revealed to the Prophet, he naturally willed this property of his to Fatima. (Rozat-el-Safa, Vol. II, page 377.)

On the authority of Ibn Abi-Hatim and some others it is written that the Prophet willed Fadak to Fatima after the verse quoted above had been revealed to him.

Allama Moin Kashfi in his well known and acknowledged book writing on the subject, says that one day the Prophet sent Ali for the subjugation of Fadak and that the Jews without any fighting came to certain terms with him and stated that they would give Fadak to the Prophet. Ali returned and told the Prophet about it. Soon after this the Angel Gabriel appeared to the Prophet and delivered a message sent by God said : "He desires the Prophet to give his kin their due." The Prophet then asked Gabriel to name the kin and the Angel replied that God meant Fatima; the Prophet sent for Fatima and told her that Fadak would be hers.

As I have said before, there was not the slightest doubt about the right of the Prophet over this territory and therefore after his death, and according to the terms of his wishes, Fatima claimed Fadak. Abu Bakr, who was the first Caliph, however turned it down, referring to a saying which he, and he alone, heard the Prophet say, "No near kin should inherit the property of a Prophet, but it should all go in charity."

I mentioned before that when the Angel Gabriel appeared to the Holy Prophet and delivered the message from God, the Prophet sent for Fatima and willed Fadak to her. This proves that it actually became her property during his life time although the revenue continued to be taken by the Prophet.

Even Allama Asqalani in his Tafseer Durre-Mansoor writes: When the verse "give to your near kin his due" was revealed to the Prophet, he at once sent for Fatima and gave Fadak over to her.

Biyad Ibrahim also says that the Prophet gave away Fadak to Fatima on the receipt of the above mentioned verse. Sulman Hanafi in his book Almowaddat also writes that one day the Prophet sent for Fatima and told her that his reason for sending for her was to tell her about Fadak which was his own property, because it came to him without fighting and, therefore, he was giving it to her. These quotations have been from the books of the Sunni school of thought, while those of the Shia school also say the same thing. All then go to prove the fact that Fadak became the nominal property of Fatima during the life time of her father, the Prophet.

However, what is most necessary as the end to this chapter, is an advice that whatever has happened should be forgotten. Abu Bakr made a mistake in confiscating the land that rightly belonged to Fatima, but why make this a bone of contention today? Is it not a pitiable fact that Muslims should be divided against each other over such trifles as this. These events cannot be anything but trifles today. History records events, and besides that fact, no more attention should be paid to them. There is no time in these days to fight and squabble over what happened in the past. The most important thing is the present and future of the Muslims. If they continue fighting over the events of the past as they do now, Islam will never spread as rapidly as it would do otherwise. A lesson should be taken from the history of Europe, the two groups of thoughts, the Protestants and the Catholics had vital differences. These differences still exist today, and yet it is to be seen these two are living in harmony.

Sunnis and Shias both are Muslims, because both believe in Allah, in the Holy Prophet, in the Book and in the day of Judgment. The fact that they are both Muslims should be regarded sufficient to help each other instead of fighting. When there is so much in the world today all around us, attempting to wipe out our very existence, is it worth while, therefore, I ask you, to waste precious time in arguing over events which took place 1300 years ago. We should not forget the fact "United we stand, divided we fall." At present it is extremely necessary that all differences should be buried, to bring about a united Muslim front to face the onslaught from all sides. Islam is threatened and all efforts are being made to destroy it. The present condition of Muslims does not call for disunity, in fact, we cannot afford to be disunited.

Let the differences in the form and way of worship etc. remain, but let the fact be known that we are ONE and will stand by Islam to the end.



PART XI.

 THE DEATH AND FUNERAL CEREMONY
 OF FATIMA.

NO sooner did the Prophet die than Fatima had to face insurmountable difficulties. The kind, loving and sympathetic father died. Instead of sympathising with her in her misfortune, people ill-treated her. Her property was confiscated. She pleaded for it but to no purpose. She was charged with sedition. Soldiers were sent to arrest her and to destroy her house. Preparations were made to set fire to her house. She was humiliated, disgraced and insulted. The helpless and innocent Fatima, the beloved daughter of the Prophet, could not bear these untold miseries which ultimately resulted in her premature and untimely death.

At one occasion, this Divine Lady felt so much strain on her brain that she burst with the following verses depicting her utmost grief and melancholy state. I reproduce the lines from the most authentic book in Arabic "MAJALISUS SANIYYA" Vol. II, by Syyid Mohsin-el-Ameen-el-Husainy-el-Aamly of Syria. The original text in Arabic which follows the translation in English, speaks for itself.

ما ذا على من شم تربة احمد * ان لا يشم مدي الزمان غواليا
 صفت على مصائب لوانها * صفت على لا يام صرن لياليا

"Fate made me smell the dust of your grave. Its smell is far superior to that of rose and jasmine. After your separation such calamities befell me that if they had fallen upon days they would have turned into nights." It is nothing short of a great catastrophe. Ibn Abbas says: "When Fatima, the innocent, was about to die, she got neither fever nor headache. She held Hasan and Husain by the hand to the grave of the Prophet and offered there two rakat namaz. She embraced them and said: "O my sons, sit here with your father for a while." Ali was then in the mosque offering his prayers; she returned home and took the sheet of cloth of the Prophet. Having bathed herself she put on the remaining shroud of the Prophet. She then called Asma, the wife of Jafar. Asma said: "Yes, I am here." Fatima said: "Do not go away from here. I want to lie down here for an hour. If I do not come out in an hour, call me thrice. If I reply, come in, otherwise let it be understood that I am with the Prophet."

She then stood at the place of the Prophet and offered two 'rakat' prayers. She then lay down and covered her face with the sheet. Some say that Fatima died in the mosque. In an hour, Asma called out Fatima, and said, "O mother of Hasan and Husain and daughter of the Prophet." But she got no reply. Then Asma entered the room but to her great astonishment, sorrow and misfortune, she found her dead. She then came out. In the meanwhile, Hasan and Husain met Asma and asked her where their mother was. She kept quiet. Both the sons entered the room. Husain saw her lying, moved her but to

his great misfortune, found her dead. He said to his elder brother: "May God sympathise with the death of our mother." Then they came out and went on crying "O Mohammad, today the death of our mother has revived your memory." They then informed their father, Ali, of this sad news who was in the mosque. He fell into swoon to hear this heart-rending news. When he was brought to his senses, he went home and entered the room of Fatima. As he was weeping, he was saying: "O children of Mohammad, we did not remember the death of the Prophet due to the presence of Fatima amongst us. O Fatima, in whose face shall we get a true copy of the Prophet again?" Ali then removed the cloth from the face of Fatima and found a letter by the side of her head. Its content is as follows :—"I begin in the name of God, the Beneficent, the most Merciful. Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, gives witness that there is but one God and Mohammad is the Prophet of God. I have firm belief in Heaven, Hell and the Day of Judgment and that God will bring the dead to life. O Ali ! I am the daughter of the Prophet Mohammad. God married me to you so that I may be your wife in this and the next worlds and I prefer you to others. Hence you must perform all the funeral ceremony and bury me at night and inform none of it. I entrust you to God and I wish good-bye to my progeny which will survive till the day of Judgment." When it was night, Ali bathed her and placed her on a plank and ordered Hasan to bring praying mat (Musallah). He then offered his prayer and stretched his hands towards the sky which resulted in illuminating that place for miles and miles together. When people

wanted to bury Fatima, a voice was heard from Baqi to this effect: "Bring her to me." There a grave appeared ready made. She was buried in it. Ali then sat near it and said: "O Earth, I entrust Fatima to you. She is the daughter of the Prophet. The Earth replied, "O Ali, I am more kind to her than you. Go and do not feel sorry." Ali then levelled the grave. None found her grave nor will any person find it till the day of judgment.

The above description of the death and funeral ceremony of Fatima has been copied from the books written by Sunni learned men. The books written by Shias also give the same description. *Jala-ul-Oyoon & Noorul Absar* give the same account.

The Muslim and the Bukhari say: "Fatima survived after the Prophet for six months. When she died, she was buried by Ali, her husband, at night. He did not allow Abu Bakr or Omar to participate in the funeral ceremony."

THE CHARACTER OF FATIMA.

Fatima, the innocent, was a matchless lady in every respect. She was the daughter of the Prophet who brought her up and gave her good training. She possessed all the good qualities which ought to be found in a woman of her position and status. She was a great spiritual woman. To call her "The Lady of the Light" is quite suitable and appropriate. She lived with Ali

from 3 A. H. to 11 A. H. the year of her death. She led a married life for seven years and six months. Though during this short period she had to suffer insurmountable difficulties, yet she was calm, quiet, happy and cheerful. She discharged the domestic duties to the entire satisfaction of Ali. She bore patiently the troubles and misfortunes which befell her. Her character was exemplary. The husband and the wife both were the embodiments of goodness. Ali and Fatima both were brought up by the Prophet and hence there was perfect unity between them.

On the death of Fatima a man asked Ali: "How did you pass your life with Fatima?" His eyes were filled with tears of their own accord, heaved a heavy sigh and said: "She was a sweet-smelling flower of the Heaven." Once Ali said: "I had no complaint against Fatima in her life time."

Hasan says: "Once after one day we got food at night. When we had eaten, my mother was about to take her food. Just then she heard the voice of a beggar who had been hungry for two meals. She at once gave him her share." It shows how kind and sympathetic she was.

Once Ali entering the house asked Fatima if she had anything to eat. She bent down her head and said nothing. Ali understood it. He at once went out in search of something to eat. When he returned, he found her offering her prayers to God with no thought of poverty or hunger.

In the same way, once Ali asked Fatima if she had anything to eat. She said: "There has been nothing to eat for the last three days." Ali said: "I wonder why you did not inform me of it." She said: "On my departure, my father had advised me not to trouble you in any way."

Once Fatima got fever. Ali says: "She passed a restless night. I also did not sleep to see her ailing. Having heard the call for prayer I got up and found Fatima making ablution for prayer. After prayer she performed the domestic affairs as usual though she was very much ailing." These instances show that she was obedient, submissive and dutiful.

Though Fatima was the daughter of Mohammad, the greatest Prophet of the world and wife of Ali, the bravest man of his age, yet she was very humble and meek. She had not the least touch of pride and vanity. She was quite simple. She acted upon the principle— "Simple living and high thinking." She did all the in-door work of her house happily and cheerfully. She never grumbled at the hard life she was leading.

She never took help from her neighbours in the performance of her domestic affairs. She was always awfully busy in her work. This state of affairs continued even after the arrival of Fizza.

Since the creation of the world, the great and the good have always been extremely poor. Fatima, being good and great, was no exception to this universal law.

Her whole life passed in extreme poverty, yet she was quite satisfied and contented with her lot. It was not in any way a disgrace to her, but she was rather proud of poverty.

HER PRAYER AND FEAR OF GOD.

Prayer was her most precious inheritance. Being the daughter of the founder of Islam, she understood its significance better than others. She always invariably remembered God in whatsoever wordly work she might be engaged. Salman Farsi says: "Once I saw Fatima reciting verses from the Holy Quran very sweetly and cooking her food simultaneously." Hasan Basri says: "Though Fatima was always engaged in prayers, yet she never postponed her work for the next day." Hasan says: "I always found my mother offering her prayers to God very humbly and meekly and shedding tears and praying to God for the welfare of other Muslim men and women."

Her house being adjacent to that of the Prophet, she always listened to his sermons with wrapt attention and was greatly frightened to hear such verses as dealt with the anger of God.

Once some verses describing the tortures and pain in Hell descended. The Prophet wept bitterly to receive them and did not stop weeping till Fatima was sent for. On the arrival of Fatima, he kept quiet but the

daughter, on finding out its reason burst into tears and did not stop till the verse of Blessing [آیة رحمت] descended. The father and the daughter were then consoled. Such was the life of this great and talented lady, a pride to the Muslim world.

THE LOVE OF THE PROPHET FOR FATIMA.

The love of parents for their children is proverbial. This love is inherent and universal. The great Prophet of Islam was no exception to this necessary law without which there will be confusion and chaos in this world. He was an ideal father. His love for Fatima was unbounded and limitless. When-ever he was in grief, she was called in to remove it which she invariably did. Whenever Fatima came to see the Prophet, he got up as a mark of respect for her, embraced, loved and kissed her. Whenever he returned from any war to Medina, he offered his prayers in the mosque and then directly went to Fatima to ask her and her children's welfare. *Soban* says: "When the Prophet went out, he saw Fatima in the last and when he returned home, he saw her first."

FATIMA'S LOVE FOR THE PROPHET.

Fatima loved her father very devotedly. "When-ever the Prophet came to see her, she got up as a mark of respect, kissed his forehead and requested him to sit

at her place," so says *Aisha*. The Prophet says: "Once I was hungry. Fatima sent me two loaves of bread and a little meat though she herself had eaten nothing. I took it to her and asked her to remove its covering. To her great surprise, she found the pot filled with bread and meat." Hafiz Jamaluddin says: "Once Fatima came to the mosque with a little piece of bread for her father. He looked at her face and asked where she had got it. With tears in her eyes she replied that she got some barley, ground and cooked it for her children who had eaten nothing for two days but she thought of him while giving it to them and hence she brought him a little piece. Hearing this the eyes of the Prophet were filled with tears. He was eating this little piece and saying to Fatima that he was eating it after four days' starvation."

FATIMA'S STATUS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

Mulla Husain Kashfi and Mulla Abdur Rahman Jami write in their respective books *Rauzatush Shohada* and *Shawahid-un-Nabuwat* thus :-

Once some Quraish women who had not embraced Islam went to the Prophet in the mosque to request him to allow Fatima to participate in a marriage ceremony. He agreed to it and promised to send her. After their departure, he told Fatima to go there for God had ordered to treat even his enemies very kindly. She

accepted it but remarked that being ill-clad, those women would hold her to ridicule. Just then Gabriel came to the Prophet, saluted and then informed him that God wanted Fatima to participate in that ceremony for if she was there some thing supernatural would take place there.

Accordingly, she wrapped herself in a sheet of cloth and went there all alone. The Quraish women had been thinking of laughing at and befooling Fatima. No sooner did she arrive there, than all the house was illuminated. Their eyes were dazzled to see the magnificence and grandeur of her face, dress and the crown at her head with many girl attendants of matchless and peerless beauty. They were filled with anger and jealousy. Some amongst them requested Fatima to take food. She declined with thanks and appealed to them to embrace Islam if they really wanted to please her and some fortunate women did accept Islam.

The author of 'Risala Sirat of Fatima' says : "Once it was an Eid day. After offering her morning prayers she was busy in grinding flour. Hasan and Husain were playing. They came to know that it was Eid day. They went to their mother and insisted upon providing them with fine and new clothes, for they said that other children would put on good dress, use scent and ride on camels. Fatima was quite helpless. She did not know what to do. She tried her level best to console them but failed. At length she very humbly prayed to God to help her and provide

her sons with clothes for she herself was extremely poor and had nothing. God granted her prayer and a certain tailor handed over clothes to her and went away.

Ibn Abbas says: "Once a man of the Bani Salim tribe came to see the Prophet and addressed him with insulting words and expressed his desire to put him to sword. Omar wanted to punish him for his impertinence but the Prophet pacified Omar telling him that God had ordained him to preach Islam in a mild tone and hence he should be afraid of the anger of God and fire of Hell. This sermon of the Prophet was so effective that the Arab had no other alternative but to embrace Islam. The Prophet told his companions to teach him some verses of the Holy Quran. When he had learnt them, the Prophet asked him if he had some wealth. He said that he was the poorest man of the Bani Salim tribe. In accordance with the wishes of the Prophet Saad Ibn Ebad gave him a camel and Ali handed over to him his turban. Salman brought the poor Arab to the house of Fatima to feed him but she had nothing to eat for the last three days. However, she gave her sheet of cloth to Salman to mortgage it with the Jew, Shamoon, for some corn. Salman related the whole matter to the Jew who thought for a few minutes and embraced Islam.

HER SATISFACTION IN POVERTY.

It is an admitted fact that Fatima alone inherited the good qualities of her father and so she had patience, satisfaction and contentment. Superficially viewed, it

looks easy to be patient and contented but the worth of these virtues can be known only in the days of adversity and misfortune. Ordinary people cannot practise these virtues. Fatima, the innocent, showed patience in times of great misfortunes, was generous and charitable in extreme poverty. From the study of her life it seems that her father gave her the dowry of poverty and shyness. To her great misfortune she got these very things at her husband's home also. Fatima, finding herself in a very poor house did not at all feel sorry. She was rather happy, because she thought that her father was much poorer than her husband and as such there was no occasion for complaint. She remained satisfied and contended.

Those who are near and dear to God take the worldly troubles and difficulties in this very light which ordinary people cannot have.

Owing to these admirable virtues she was superior to all women. Though she was extremely poor, yet she bore the difficulties and hardships caused on this account patiently and happily. She never grudged and grumbled at her misfortune. Even in her days of extreme poverty she was so generous and charitable that generally people could not understand that she was poor and had nothing to eat. The author of the life of *Zuhra* says that God had made her a woman of self-sacrificing spirit right from the very beginning of her birth. She was only 10 years of age when Fatima of Syria came to see her hearing of her intelligence and wisdom. She was well versed in **Zaboor*, Old Testament and New Testament.

She brought many presents from Syria such as jewels, fruits and clothes and delicious eatables. Fatima welcomed her warmly and heartily. No sooner did she get those gifts than she presented them for the service of Islam. Fatima of Syria was taken aback to see this generosity of the daughter of the Prophet and she embraced her and continued to praise Fatima till the time of her death.

HER SHYNESS AND CHASTITY.

God made Fatima shy and chaste. She was an ideal woman. She was an embodiment of chastity, piety and shyness. She was an example for other women. She is the very lady in whose praise the verse of Tathir was descended. A lady who has been praised by God is beyond the praise of any human being.

She says: "No women should see other woman naked except in very special circumstances. Two women must not sleep together naked. And if by chance a woman sees any other woman naked, she must not praise her before her husband." It was due to her shyness that she told her funeral ceremony to be performed at night.

Once the Prophet asked Ali: "Which is the best quality in a woman?" He kept silent. Coming home he asked her this question and she said: "The best quality of a woman is that she must not see and be seen by others." Ali told it to the Prophet. He said: "O Ali! this is the correct answer to my question and Fatima is the chief of all the women of this world."

Once Abdullah, son of Maktoom, who was blind, was in search of the Prophet. He was then in the house of Fatima. Hearing this, Abdullah came into her house. Fatima seeing him hid herself in a room. She came out when he had gone. The Prophet said: "Fatima! Abdullah is blind. Why did you take this trouble?" She said: "O father! he was blind but I was not blind."

One more example of her shyness is given below from the Mishkat. Once the Prophet came to see Fatima at her home with a boy servant. Fatima was then putting on a very small dress. She was trying her level best to hide herself. The Prophet said: "O Fatima! fear not, I am your father and he is your boy-servant."

A MATCHLESS EXAMPLE OF HER CHARACTER.

Shamoon, the Jew, who had embraced Islam through the blessings of the sheet of Fatima was boycotted by all the members of his community. His business was completely stopped. He was persecuted and tortured in every possible way by his community. By chance his wife died at night, which was dreadfully dark and cold. He went to every house in this stormy night but none came out to help him. Then Fatima came to know of this heart-rending news and she alone went to his house in that dark, cold and dreadful night. She washed his wife's body and wrapped it in a shroud and performed other necessary work in this connection.

THE CHILDREN OF FATIMA.

Fatima gave birth to five children, three sons and two daughters. Hasan was the eldest son. So Ali was called Abul Hasan. He was born on the 15th of Ramadhan 2 A. H. Six months after his birth Husain was born in the mid of Shaban 2 A. H. Then Zainab was born in 5 A. H. and was married to Abdullah, son of Jafar. Ummekulsoom was born in about 9 A. H. and was married to Mohammad, son of Jafar Taiyyar.

THE BURIAL PLACE OF FATIMA.

The grave of Fatima has been attributed to four different places which are as follows :—Behind the grave of the Prophet ; in the Prophet's mosque where the Shias and Sunnis both pay their homage to her without any distinction and where there is an epitaph also. According to a tradition her grave is in the garden of the family members of the Prophet. This mausoleum is not very grand. It is very simple. According to another tradition, she is buried in Bait-ul-Hazan. It is so called because Fatima after the death of the Prophet went there alone and wept there. Ali made a mosque at this very place to perpetuate her memory. Many poems are written on the minaret of the grave of Fatima.



PART XII.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FATIMA.

AS I have not mentioned this before, I think it necessary before I go any further, to mention some of the characteristics of Fatima, the privileges she enjoyed etc. Her characteristics were very many, but for want of space, I will not be able to write more than a few here.

1. THE POVERTY OF FATIMA. There are many stories current about the outward poverty which surrounded Fatima. It is a well known fact that Ali was not a wealthy man and all she had in the house was one or two pieces of furniture and a few utensils that were absolutely necessary for cooking etc: Her clothes, which were always of some ordinary cloth, were covered with darns and patches. Even her children were always dressed in plain white clothes, and if one looked closely, it could be seen that they had been neatly stitched in many places. If Fatima ever had a little money to spare, she would always spend it in buying something for Ali or the children, and keep it aside till they needed it. She would never buy anything for herself because she said she did not at all mind wearing her old patched clothes. It is said that the long cloth sheet that she used to cover herself with, had not only one, but very many patches on it, besides being darned and stitched in many other places.

One day Salman Farsi saw this patched sheet round her, the sight moved him to tears and he uttered the words: "Pity that kings should wear the costliest of garments, while the beloved daughter of the Prophet should have a sheet which contains so many patches." Fatima heard him and told him not to feel sad over it, because she did not mind it at all. This should be a lesson to woman nowadays, who seem to think poverty a crime. If they happen to have hard days, they sulk and grumble, instead of trying to be cheerful and make the best of a bad job. Today if a woman sees her neighbour wearing a certain kind of silk, she will not be content unless she goes out and buys something better, even if she can ill-afford it. If a friend has a car, and her husband cannot afford to have one she is discontented and constantly nags about it. Fatima loved her neighbours, she knew they were much better off than herself, but she did not mind it at all. There was not a spark of envy in her heart towards them. When she met them and they were wearing fine clothes, she did not feel it as long as she was happy. People today should take an example from Fatima. If they are poor, there is absolutely no need to be ashamed of their poverty. As I said before, "poverty is no crime; it is much better to be poor and honest, than to be rich and a robber." If a few more followed the examples set by Fatima, there would be much more happiness in this world today.

2. THE SHYNESS OF FATIMA. Fatima was always noted for her shyness and reserve; she was shyness personified with the greatest dignity. One should say she was wrapped in purity and virgin shyness.

One day a blind man came before her and she at once did purdah. The Holy Prophet who happened to be with her, asked her just to see what she would answer, why she did it when she knew quite well that the man was stone blind and could not see her. Fatima replied that she did purdah, not because he could see her, but because she could see him.

One day the Prophet asked his companions what 'woman' meant and they replied 'purdah.' The Prophet then asked "when a woman is nearest God?" To this Fatima at once replied: "A woman is nearest God when she is in purdah."

Another day when the Prophet was talking to Fatima, he asked her what was the very best thing for a woman and Fatima replied that the best thing for a woman would be that she should see nobody and be seen by nobody.

Those Muslim women of today who wish to follow in the footsteps of this great daughter of the Prophet, should take a lesson from the above and give up the newly fancied idea of coming out of Purdah and condemn it as the cause of all evils.

Fatima found no pleasure in going out; she hardly used to go out except on Thursdays and Saturdays. On these days she used to visit the graves of those who fell in the battle of Uhud. She loved her home and used to spend most of the time in it, doing her best to keep it as clean and comfortable as possible for her husband and children.

Fatima was always very quiet in her manners. Nobody ever heard her raise her voice or talk aloud. Although she was always friendly, there was something reserved about her. In company she would never chatter away; she would sit quietly and listen, and speak only when she was spoken to, or when it was necessary to say a thing. If there was a man present, she would always keep her head bent and her face covered, even if he happened to be a near relation.

When she attended any festival etc. although she was the daughter of the Prophet, she would always keep in the back-ground. She would never push herself in front, or make herself heard. Very often people would ask the Prophet if Fatima was not present and he would answer that she was and then she would be found sitting quietly in a corner with the children. Sometimes her friends would persuade her to sit with them in front, but she would beg them to excuse her and let her be where she was.

When she was in the company of any old person, she was always most humble and full of reverence, for she had a great respect for old age. I have mentioned about her treatment towards her old mother-in-law. The old lady always said that the happiest years of her life, were the two she spent with her son and daughter-in-law. Fatima always greatly respected old age, when she went out and if she saw a very old woman alone, she would go and help her along.

3. THE HEAVENLY LIGHT OF FATIMA.
I said before that Fatima's clothes were in a very poor condition, but although they were torn and patched,

they had a light and magnificence of their own that can never be equalled. There was always a mellow light radiating from her garments. One day she had no food in the house and no money to buy any, so she had to pawn some of her clothes with a Jew in return for some grain. When the Jew returned that night, as soon as he stepped into the house, he was struck by the light that lit up the place. It seemed to him as though the whole house was lit by the full moon. He called his wife and asked her the reason for this extraordinary phenomenon and was told that the shining light was due to the presence of Fatima's clothes in the house. This had a great effect on the Jew and he at once made up his mind to become a Muslim. He told this story to many of his friends, and all of them, together with all the members of his family became Muslims.

Once when the only lamp in Fatima's house went out, because there was no oil and there was no money in the house to buy any the need of a light was not felt, because the light that radiated from Fatima's clothes, was enough to illuminate the whole house.

4. HEAVENLY HELP. The following incidents will show that many a time when Fatima was in difficulty, she received Heavenly help. There were some very wealthy Jews in Medina, the daughter of one of these was going to be married. These Jews heard about the poverty of Fatima and of the old and shabby clothes she always wore. They thought this would be a good opportunity to make a laughing-stock of the

daughter of the Prophet, so they decided among themselves to send her an invitation to the wedding. When the time came, they sent a messenger to the Prophet asking him to allow Fatima to attend the marriage ceremony. The Prophet told the messenger that he would not say anything as Fatima was married and that he should go to Ali for the permission. The messenger then went to Ali ; Ali was greatly surprised at the request, because not only had the invitation come from Jews, but from the most wealthy Jews in Medina at that time ; he was so surprised that he could not reply at once and told the messenger that he would reply in a little while. When the Jew had left, Ali proceeded at once to the Prophet and after some consideration they both decided that as the Jews had asked Fatima to be present, it would not look nice to refuse ; so they gave her the permission. Fatima was getting ready to attend the wedding and did not at all mind the fact that she had to go in her old clothes, but God knowing what was in the minds of the Jews, did not wish her to be unnecessarily hurt. So God sent the Angel Gabriel to Fatima's house, with trays of beautiful clothes and lovely jewels ; Fatima was astonished at the lovely sight and could not believe that they were all for her. Then Gabriel told her that it was the wish of God that she should wear them and attend the wedding. So for the first time in her life Fatima wore expensive clothes and glittering jewels and when the Jews saw her they were absolutely thunder-struck and could do nothing but gaze. They had been waiting for her to arrive clad in her old patched clothes and

to start making fun of her, but to see her thus appear in more costly garments than their own, and more expensive jewellery, was really more than they could understand. It was a terrible lesson to them and they decided never again to try to ridicule those in poverty.

The same sort of thing happened some years before this incident. In Mecca when Fatima was only a child, some rich Quraish people invited her to some festival, with the idea of making fun of her when she arrived in her old garments and this time as well God helped her by sending her fine clothes.

One day Fatima was alone in the house. When she began to feel very ill, she had not a maid then and Ali had gone with the Prophet on some business. Suddenly the Angel Gabriel appeared to Ali and told him to return home at once as Fatima needed help ; and also gave Ali some medicines to give her. Ali at once hurried home and found Fatima very ill ; he at once gave the medicine which made her feel better. From that time Ali never left her alone in the house if she was in any way feeling indisposed.

5. THE GENEROSITY OF FATIMA :— It is well-known to all what a very generous person Fatima was. If I had to mention all her acts of generosity it would make a very thick volume. It is said that if a man gave away all he possessed in charity, yet he would be far from outshining the generosity of Fatima. If a beggar came to her and she had only a crust in the house, she would at once give it to him.

One day when the Holy Prophet emerged from the mosque after saying prayers, an old bent beggar, clad only in rags, went up to him and begged to be given something. The Prophet had nothing to give the man, and thinking that Fatima might be able to spare something, called Bilal and asked him to take the beggar to Fatima's house. The Prophet did not know that times were very bad with Fatima and that she had not had a morsel of food in the house. As a matter of fact she had not had anything to eat herself for three whole days. The little she had, had been given to Ali and the children. Bilal left the beggar at Fatima's door. When she opened it he told her he was starving, for he had been without food for two days and that he was cold, for he had nothing to cover his body except the few rags on him. Fatima was at a loss as to what to do; all she had was a blanket on which the children used to sleep at night; she brought this and gave it to the beggar. The beggar took it and said: "This will cover me, but how am I to appease my hunger." Fatima had on a necklace that had been given to her by her cousin; she was very fond of this and always wore it; it was the one thing she could not make up her mind to pawn. But when the beggar spoke to her thus, and seeing him in such a hungry state, she at once removed the necklace and gave it to him, telling him to sell it and buy food with the money.

The beggar before taking the necklace to be sold, went to the Prophet and told him about it. The Prophet at the time was talking to some of his

companions and he and the rest were moved to tears at the generosity of Fatima, for all knew how greatly Fatima valued this necklace. One of the companions volunteered to buy the necklace and the Prophet said these words. "He who buys the necklace, either singly or jointly, will never go to Hell." The companion who had made the offer asked the beggar how much he wanted for it, the beggar replied: "Give one day's meals and one silver piece." The companion, who had just received his share of the booty after the battle of Khaibar, gave him 200 silver pieces and the beggar went away most delighted.

The companion then sent the necklace back to Fatima, together with a slave, telling her that she should keep both, Fatima was very happy to get back her necklace, but the slave she at once liberated.

One day, Fatima had a piece of cloth with her, so she made it into a jacket for one of her children. That very evening she went to the cemetery, and on her way back she saw a little boy sitting in a by-lane ; he was scantily clad and was shivering with cold. Fatima felt very sad for the little chap, so taking him by the hand she led him to her house ; there she gave him a few of her children's clothes, also the new jacket which she had made only that day.

The tale I am about to relate happened when Fatima was only a child. One day she saw a poor little beggar girl in the street—a girl just about her own

age ; she felt very sad because she had to give her. That evening when the Holy Prophet returned home, he gave Fatima a packet of sweets. She thanked him and asked him if she might go out for a little while with one of the maids. The Prophet was surprised at the request, but gave the permission to do so. Fatima went out with the maid and searched up and down the streets until she found the little girl she had seen that morning, and gave her the packet of sweets her father had given her.

Another time, Fatima had a little money in the house ; she required some things to cook the evening's meal ; so she asked Ali to go out and buy the things required. Ali went and on his way back he saw an old man sitting at the corner of the street. Ali asked him what the matter was for he was looking quite down-hearted and the man replied that he and his wife were hungry, for they had nothing to eat the whole day. Ali came and told Fatima this and she at once said: "We will give him these things. It does not matter if we have to go without food until tomorrow." Ali readily agreed and took the things he had bought to the old man.

One day, Fatima had just finished preparing the meals, when she heard some one say that a family in the next street were in need of food and that they had no money to buy any. Fatima at once wrapped up all she had cooked and sent it to the people who were in need of it.

I have already said before it would take too much space to write in full about the great generosity of Fatima; I have mentioned only a few here. Each and every one of Fatima's deeds is an example in itself and should be followed by the people now-a-days who do not seem to know the true meaning of the word 'Generosity.' Wealthy people now-a-days will most willingly give Rs. 200 or even Rs. 2,000 towards some foolish subscriptions or other, because their names will appear in the papers, yet they will not spare a pice to a poor blind beggar who perhaps has been starving for days together.

6. SUPERNATURAL THINGS:—There have been many occasions when meals from Heaven have been served before Fatima. There cannot be any doubt in the minds of the people about this, while on the other hand there are people who have faith regarding this as something of common occurrence when it concerns personages like the Prophet or Fatima. The whole of the Old and the New Testaments are full of stories of the supernatural and are believed by the followers of those books.

One day there was nothing in the house. Fatima and the others had nothing to eat for two days and there was no money to buy any food. On the third day Ali borrowed a silver piece and went at once to the bazaar to get some food. While on the way, he met one of the companions of the Holy Prophet wandering about. Ali, of course, asked him the reason which

brought him out of the house at that time of the day. The companion at first tried to evade the question, but when Ali insisted, he said he was out because he was trying to find a way to earn some thing so that he might be able to appease the hunger of his people at home ; he then told Ali the whole story. When he came to the end of the sad tale Ali came to the conclusion, that the need of the companion was even greater than his own. Ali then told him he had just borrowed a silver piece, and was on his way to buy something from the market, but as he thought that the companion was more in need of help, he wished to give him the silver piece. The companion at first did not want to deprive Ali of the money, but when Ali insisted, he accepted it.

Ali then proceeded to the mosque and remained there praying until sunset. When the evening prayers were over, the Prophet went to Ali and asked him if he could come and have dinner with himself and Fatima. Ali asked him to do so by all means, but he did not know how to tell the Prophet that there would be no dinner, for there was nothing to eat in the house. Any how they went to the house, and found Fatima busy saying prayers, and Ali was very much surprised to see a tray full of delicious dishes on the table. After saying her prayer, Fatima spread the meals out. Ali could not help wondering where all these goods came from. The Prophet then told him that all this food was a gift from Heaven and was the result of his having deprived himself and given away the coin to the companion.

Another time the same thing happened. Fatima had no food in the house and no money to buy any. The children were crying and Fatima did not know what to do to appease their hunger. Just then the Angel Gabriel appeared carrying a tray of food and lovely fruits etc., and laid it before Fatima saying that God had sent it to her.

One day Fatima and her children saw the neighbours' children eating some lovely fruit. Although the children did not ask her for the same, she knew they wished they could have some too. Fatima sighed and wished she had some money to be able to buy some for her children, but as she had none, she took them and went indoors and there on the table was a dish of lovely fruit. Fatima knew that God had sent it to her in answer to her wish.

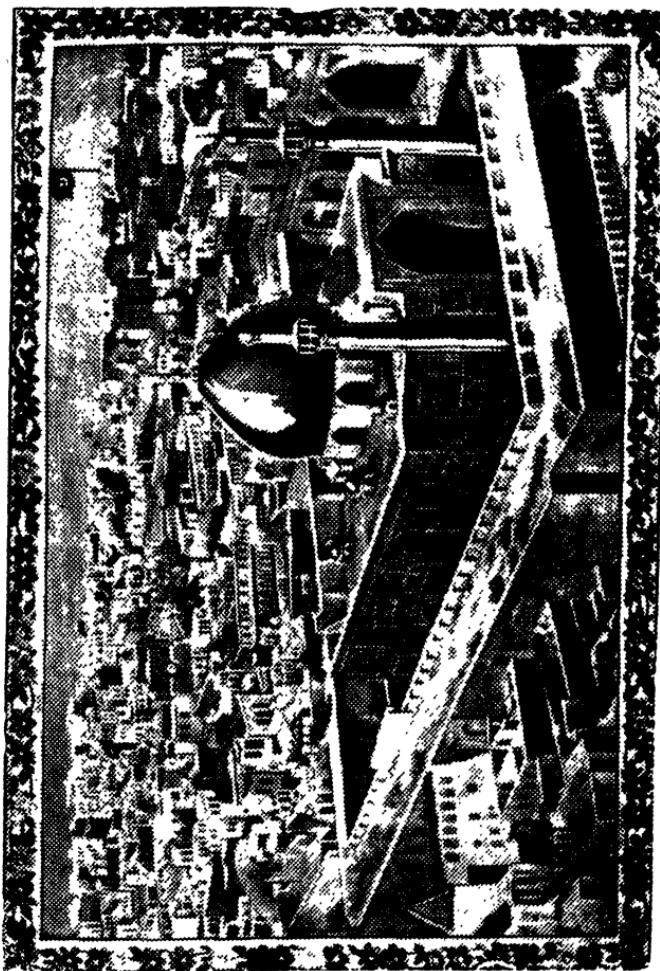
Fatima used to do all her own household work before she got a maid. I have mentioned that even after she got a maid they used to do the work by turns. Often Fatima used to get very tired, but still she always did her part of the job. One day while she was doing the grinding, she felt very much tired and did not know how she was to continue. After a while Ali returned home and he was surprised to see Fatima lying beside the stone with one of her children beside her. They were both fast asleep and the stone was going round and round and grinding the corn by itself.

One day Fatima went to the mosque to say her prayers as usual ; little Husain followed her there and as she took some time over her prayers, he got tired and fell asleep. When Fatima finished saying her prayer, she wondered how she was going to carry the child home, as he was a big child for his age and rather heavy. To her surprise, when she carried him up, he felt as light as a feather and it was with ease that she carried him home. Ali met her at the door and told her that she should not have carried Husain all that long distance, but she told him that she was not at all tired, for God had given her Divine assistance again and that the child had been no weight at all.

There are many such incidents as show that God sent Divine help to Fatima many times during her life time.

Another time, Fatima had no maid. It was the beginning of winter and Husain and Hasan had no warm clothes. Some one had given Fatima a piece of warm cloth to make suits for them, but Fatima was so very busy all day that she could not find the time to work them. The days were getting more and more cold and yet Fatima had not found the time to work the suits. One morning there was a tap at the door, and when Fatima opened it, she found an old woman standing on the steps. Fatima asked her what she wanted and the woman asked her if she had a piece of warm material in the house ; Fatima said, " yes ". The woman then asked her to give it to her. Although it

صریح علی ابن ابی طالب علیہما السلام



The tomb of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Holy Prophet and the husband of Fatima, at Najaf Ashraf, Iraq.

meant depriving her children of its use, Fatima could not refuse the poor woman and gave her the cloth. She told Ali afterwards that the woman was poorly clad and looked cold. So she had not the heart to refuse her. A few hours later, again there was a knock at the door. This time Ali went to open it and he found the same woman standing on the steps. She put a parcel into his hands and disappeared. Ali took the parcel to Fatima and they opened it together. In it they found the same material worked into two nice suits, one for Hasan and one for Husain.

Another time, another incident happened during winter, when it was bitterly cold. There was no food in the house and no money to buy any. Ali and Fatima did not know what to do ; they did not mind going hungry themselves, but it made their hearts ache to see the two children hungry. That evening they were all sitting together, when Fatima said that she heard some one calling. Ali went to the door and returned with a tray of nice hot food which he said he had found on the steps.

Many may wonder why Fatima was thus favoured and the answer is a simple one. Fatima being a good and perfect woman was naturally the favourite of Allah. Fatima represented perfect womanhood—a compound of the practical and the visionary, of dreams and realities. It is, indeed, a sad thing to say, but that type of true womanhood is almost extinct today. The kind we see, only too often today, is the shallow, empty painted

doll, who thinks of nothing beyond money and dress and how to have a good time. A man may have a wife, but unless she be a real true woman, home is not home to him ; it is just a house where he eats and sleeps. With a true woman of Fatima's type, a man can be anything, but without her he can be nothing. A good woman governs a man's life, fills it with light and gladness, a perfect mother to her children. A man's life can be said to be full only when a good woman comes into it ; without such a woman a man is just a solitary wanderer in the wilderness. A man today may seem content with the other type of woman but is he ? He may be proud of her, her looks, her popularity, the fact that some of his many friends admire her ; the fine house she keeps and the way she entertains ; but on occasion of sickness, sorrow and trials, one feels sure he wishes his dancing doll was a little more Fatima's type of woman.



PART XIII.

THE FLIGHT.

THE infidels persecuted, tortured and ill-treated the Prophet but he was never downcast. The death of Abu Talib, Prophet's uncle, which occurred ten years after his prophethood, made the matter much worse. Calling the family members of *Abdul Muttalib* near his death-bed he gave them the following instructions:— “If you shall follow Mohammad and obey him, you shall enjoy happiness and peace in both the worlds. Maintain the prestige of *Kaaba*. Be always merciful. Refrain yourselves from arrogance and rebellion for they are the sources of ruin and destruction. Help the poor and the needy. Always speak the truth. Be always ready to sacrifice your lives for the sake of Mohammad who is truthful and honest. The great persons of this age are embracing Islam and becoming his followers. All have begun to love him in their hearts. O members of the Hashimite ! help him with men and money.”

His death was a great calamity for the Prophet and Fatima was separated from such a good person as was ever ready to give his life for her. The death of Khadija confounded her. She was then only five years old. When the Prophet returned after having buried Khadija, Fatima asked him where her mother was. Though it looks an ordinary question yet it is very difficult to answer it. God and the Prophet understood the significance of this question. God then and

there sent words to this effect. "Be peace and blessings of God upon Fatima. Your mother is now in a very fine house which is made of pure gold and which is situated between the houses of Mary and Aasia." Hearing this Fatima said: "Undoubtedly God is the Peace." Though Fatima was then only five years old, yet her words are full of meaning and significance. However, the year 10 A. H. was an year of great misfortune for Fatima and therefore this year is called the year of grief. The Prophet seldom went out from the house and always consoled Fatima. But it does not mean that the Prophet forgot his mission. There was no slackness in it. The very next year the Prophet started for Taif to preach Islam. The inhabitants of Taif ill-treated the Prophet and paid no heed to him. On his way back, a slave Christian named Adas embraced Islam.

There are some bigoted non-Muslims who circulate this false rumour that Islam has been propagated at the point of sword. Now what explanation will they give for such persons embracing Islam? On his way back from Taif, Nakhala Jannat embraced Islam at Batan. It was the habit of the Prophet to explain the cardinal doctrines of Islam on the occasion of Haj when the people of different tribes gathered together and asked them to take him among his tribe if possible so that he might offer his prayers to God peacefully but none accepted this request. Some people of the middle class of *Yasrab* accepted Islam who belonged to the tribe of Khazraj. When they reached Medina, they wrote to

the Prophet to depute a man to teach them the Quran and give them other necessary religious instructions. The Prophet sent *Masab*, son of *Omair*, who was the uncle of the Prophet. He had committed to memory the whole of the Quran which had been descended till then. He was the first Muslim to be deputed to preach Islam. Many persons in Medina embraced Islam. On the occasion of the pilgrimage he sent twelve persons out of them to the Prophet. They also requested the Prophet to go to Medina where they would try to serve him to the best of their ability.

The enmity of the Quraish infidels was increasing to see the ever-growing power and influence of the Holy Prophet. They held a meeting consisting of 40 persons in the *Darul Nadwa* and decided to select one member of each tribe for putting the Prophet to death. In these circumstances, the Hashimite would not dare to fight all the tribes combined together. This resolution was passed unanimously and all gathered in the *Masjid-ul-Haram*. When it was night, they wanted to enter the house of the Prophet. Abu Sahab, who was their secret keeper, prevented them from entering the house at night and asked them to do it in the morning. So they besieged the Prophet's house. The Prophet had come to know all these plots through revelations and had been permitted to leave Mecca for Medina. He asked Ali to sleep in his bed for he was migrating from that place to Medina. Ali said : "Will you reach your destination safe and sound if I sleep here?" He said, "Yes." He then prostrated in thanks before Allah. This

was the first prostration in Islam. Then the Prophet gave the following instructions to Ali :—" O my brother-in-Islam! God is testing us just as Abraham and Ismail were tested. Nay, this is a more serious test than that ; for Ismail's head was about to be cut off by his father at the command of God whereas you are offering your head to be cut off by the enemy. O brother! have patience for the blessed are they who are patient. Many people have kept their trusts in me. After my departure, return them to the people before witnesses. As soon as you are in receipt of any letter from me, then start for Medina with Fatima Zahra, Fatima, daughter of Asad and those who are willing to accompany you." Having given him these instructions, he came out of his house. Gabriel was his guide. The Quraish were besieging his house but they could not see him going away. The Prophet reached the cave of Sawr (ثور) and stayed there three days and reached Medina safe and sound.

People came to know of his flight after his departure. The Quraish gathered together at Abtah and Aqaba, son of Abi Moeet began to befool those who had kept their trusts in the Prophet for he would now gather and train forces with this very money and attack them.

Ali was at his uncle's house. When he came to know of this rumour, he assured them to return their trusts.

The above statement throws some light upon the character of the Prophet. Just think of the huge trusts the Prophet had, for according to the words of Aqba, he could raise and maintain an army with it. Though the Quraish had enmity with the Prophet, yet they considered him to be honest and truthful. They were perfectly certain that the Prophet was right and just in his claims yet the Satan had misguided and misled them.

In short, Ali returned all the trusts. Shortly after the Prophet wrote a letter to him to this effect :—" Your separation is now unbearable and intolerable to me. I complained about it to God. God has promised that you will come here safe and sound and I have been directed by God to write to you. Get yourself fully equipped with sword and other necessary weapons and come here. Do not be afraid of your enemies. God will protect you. I have left some money with Fatima. Buy a camel with it. Bring Zaid, son of Haris, with you. I am very anxious to see you. Come immediately."

This letter shows that the Prophet had great love and affection for Ali and Fatima. In short, Ali was overjoyed to read this letter. He began to make preparations for the journey. Before starting, he stood at Abtah and said : "They who had deposited any trusts in the Prophet must come to me to take them. Now I cannot keep them. I shall go away from here very soon in the broad day light. I am not in any way afraid of you."

The Quraish became silent to hear this speech. But Abu Jahal began to boast and induced the Quraish to kill Ali then and there. Hearing this, Hamza stood up and threatened Abu Jahal and recited poems in praise of Ali. Abu Jahal had to keep quiet. Ali started for Medina and reached there safe and sound.

FATIMA'S PRAYER FOR MUSLIM MEN AND WOMEN.

Hasan says : "I saw my mother standing under the prayer arch on Thursday night. She was engaged in prayers till morning. During all this time she was praying for the Muslim men and women and not for herself. I then asked her its reason. She said : "O my son! first take care of your neighbours and then look after your own house." It is very easy to utter these words but it is very difficult to practise them.

Musa-el-Kazim has also supported the above statement which shows that she devoted much of her time to the prayer for the Muslim men and women. In fact, these prayers are instructions to us. They teach us how we should behave towards our neighbours.

THE SWELLING OF HER LEGS.

The legs of the Prophet got swollen due to constant praying to God. God was compelled to say : "O seeker and guide of Truth! the Quran has not been

descended to give so much trouble to thee." What a wonderful prayer it was. Fatima's prayer resembled that of the Prophet in this respect. Husain said : "None prayed to God so much as Fatima. Her legs got swollen owing to constant standing for prayers."

THE EXCITEMENT OF FATIMA.

Every action of the good and the great is attributed to God as is evident from this verse of the Quran :-

"O Prophet! you have not thrown this handful of dust but it has been thrown by God." It means that their actions are nothing but the manifestations of God.

It is said in traditions that God is free from anger and happiness, but He has some friends whose anger is the anger of God and whose happiness is the happiness of God. Fatima is one of such friends. It is a saying of the Prophet through Salman : "He who loved Fatima will be in Heaven with me and he who annoyed her will be burnt in the fire of Hell. O Salman ! Fatima's love will help people considerably. I shall be pleased with the man who has pleased Fatima and I shall be angry with the man who has displeased her." According to the Ayoon Radha the Prophet says : "God gets angry when Fatima is angry and He is pleased when she is pleased." It is a famous tradition: "Fatima is a part and parcel of my heart. He who displeased her displeased me." There are many other traditions on this subject which are omitted here lest the book should become very much voluminous.

VERSES OF THE QURAN IN PRAISE OF FATIMA.

“Undoubtedly, Abraham is one of their followers.” It is written in the Tafsir Maalim-ul-Zulfa that the Prophet said: “When God created Abraham, He removed the curtain from his eyes. Abraham then looked at the sky and saw a bright light. He asked God whose light it was. God said that it was the light of the Prophet. Abraham then asked God that there was a light beside it also. God replied that it was the light of Ali who was the champion in many wars and of His religion. He asked God that there was a third light. God replied that it was the light of Fatima which was between their lights. Abraham asked God that he was seeing two more lights. God told him that they were the lights of Hasan and Husain.

2. “When Moses asked water for his people.”

It is written in the Tafsir Hasan Askari that when the Israelites got thirsty in the Tib field and found no sign of water, all went weeping to Moses and complained that they were extremely tired and thirsty. Moses prayed to God to give them water for the sake of Mohammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain. Moses was ordained to strike his stick against a rock. He did it and twelve streams began to flow from that place.

3. It is written in the Quranic verse 'Hal Ata' that the person living in Heaven will neither experience the heat of the sun nor extreme cold. On the authority of Ibn Abbas it is written in the Beharul Anwar that when the people will settle in the Heaven, they will see a light with which the whole place will be illuminated. The people of the Heaven will ask God about this mystery. He will reply that it is neither the light of the sun nor that of the moon, but the light is due to the smiling of Ali and Fatima to see a certain thing.

4.

"In those houses which God has allowed to be raised high and His name should be remembered."

This sentence is a piece of the verse 'Noor.'

On the authority of Ibn Abbas it is written in Behar-ul-Anwar that the Prophet on being asked which house it referred to replied that it refers to the house of the Prophet and that of Fatima.

5. قوله تعالى لابليس استكبرت ام كنت من العالين God asked Satan : "You became proud ! or you considered yourself to be great ?"

The Prophet being asked who were the great persons said that they were Mohammad, Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain. Besides the above verses, there are many more in praise of Fatima such as Qurba, Mubahala and others.

THE MIRACLES OF FATIMA.

Miracle is something supernatural. It is beyond the power of a man. It is wrought by persons, gifted with supernatural powers and Fatima was one of such beings gifted with this power. One day in the early years of the prophethood of Mohammad, some infidels went to the Prophet and said: "You claim yourself to be a Prophet and declare yourself to be superior to others; the preceding Prophets showed miracles. You should also perform some." Some persons said: "Perform miracles like Moses." Some said: "The fire into which Abraham had been thrown became cold. Do it." One party said: "Moses shifted a mountain and held it. You should also do it." The other party said: "Perform some miracles like Jesus." The Prophet said: "I have brought you the best miracle—the Quran. If some miracle is shown to you and you refuse to accept Islam, you are bound to be punished for it." Then at the command of God he said to those who wanted to see the miracle performed by Noah: "Go to the mountain Bu Qabis to see the power of God and when you are on the point of destruction, seek help from Ali and his sons." He said to the seekers of the miracles performed by Abraham: "Go into the wilderness of Mecca and then see his miracle. When you are on the point of death, you shall see a woman in the air. Seek help from her." He said to the seekers of the miracles of Moses, "Go and stay near the Kaaba. When you see it, you shall get rid of the

trouble through Hamza." He said to Abu Jahal and other "Stay here. When they will return, I shall show you the miracles of Jesus."

The first group went to the mountain Abu Qubais. All of a sudden water began to issue from the side of the mountain. It began to rain without any cloud. The place was over-flooded. The water reached their necks. At this time Ali with his two sons was seen on the surface of the water. They sought for protection. Ali, Hasan and Husain helped them in their misfortune and the water subsided. Ali brought them to the Prophet and they admitted that they had seen the miracle of Noah and that they had been rescued by Ali and his sons, but that they were not then visible. The Prophet said : "They are the best youths of the Heaven."

The next party reached the wilderness of Mecca. There they saw that fire began to rain from the sky. The earth was cracked and flames began to come out of it. All was about to be burnt up when a lady was seen suspended in the air and every thread of her sheet was hanging. A voice was heard saying : "Each of you should catch hold of a thread." Each of them took a thread. She then sent them to their respective houses safe and sound. All of them went to the Prophet, wept there bitterly and gave witness to the prophethood of Mohammad. The people said : "Who is she ?" The Prophet said : "She is my daughter, Fatima." In this way the other wishes of the infidels were also satisfied. Now you can well understand the position of Fatima.

THE HOME OF GRIEF.

The death of the Prophet and what happened to her after his death affected her very deeply. She was always weeping. Seeing her miserable and pitiable condition all the Shaikhs of Medina gathered together and went to Ali and said: "O Abul Hasan ! Fatima weeps day and night incessantly. It disturbs and annoys us so much that we do not feel inclined to earn our livelihood in the day-time. Please ask Fatima to weep either in the day or at night." Ali went to Fatima who kept silent to see him. He told her the complaints of the Medinites. She said: "O Abul Hasan ! why are they tired of my weeping and crying ? Only a few days of my life are left. The time of our separation for ever is knocking at the door. By God I tell you that I will not stop weeping until and unless I reach the Prophet."

Ali made a house for her to weep in Baqi outside Medina and named it Bait-ul-Ahzan. When it was ready, Fatima with her two sons went out of Medina weeping and sat at the graves of the martyrs of Uhud and wept there. Ali went there every evening to bring her home. This state of affairs continued till she fell a victim to the fatal disease which ultimately cut her life short.

THE EXPLANATION GIVEN BY THE TEACHER OF BAGHDAD.

Allama Ibn-Abil-Hadeed writes in the Nuhj-ul-Balaghah that he asked Ali, son of Farqi Shaafi, the teacher of Baghdad, if Fatima was truthful. He said: "She

was straightforward." I then asked him : " Why did Abu Bakr not give Fadak to her when she was not telling a lie." Hearing this, he smiled and said : " If Fadak had been given to her, she might come again next day and claim for Ali's caliphate and would have displaced Abu Bakr. Then it was not possible for him to refuse for by his own action he proved that Fatima was truthful and he must have been compelled to comply with her every demand whether it was reasonable or not without any witness."

The explanation given by this learned teacher is very humorous and satisfactory.



خطبة الزهراء عليهما السلام بعد وفاة أبيها (ص)

الحمد لله على ما أنعم ، وله الشكر على ما ألم به ، والثناء بما قدم من عموم نعم ابتدأها وسبوغ آراء أسدتها و تمام نعم والها جم عن الاحصاء عددها ونأى عن الجزاء أمدتها ، وتفاوت عن الارادات أبدها ، وفديهم لاستردادها بالشكر لاتصالها ، واستحمدما لخلقائق باجزالها وتنبي بالندب إلى أمثالها وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له ، كلمة جعل الأخلاص تأويلاها وضمن القلوب موصلها وافارقى التفكير معقولها الممتنع من لا بصاررويته ، ومن الالسن صفتة ومن الاوهام كيفيته ، ابتداع الاشياء لامن شئ ، كان قبلها ، وانشأها بلا احتذاء امثلاة امثلتها كوفها بقدرته ، وذرها بمشيته من غير حاجة منه إلى تكوينها ، ولرائدة له في تصويرها ، الافتبيتات الحكمته وتنبيها على طاعته واظهارقدرته وتعبد البريته واعزاز الدعوته ثم جعل التواب على طاعته ووضع العقاب على معصيته زيادة لعباده عن ذنمه ، وحياشة لهم إلى جنته وأشهد أن إلى محمد صلى الله عليه وآله عبده ورسوله اختاره وانتجبه قبل أن أرسله وسمى قبل أن اجتباه واصطفاه قبل أن ابتعثه اذ الخلائق بالغيب مكنونه وبستر الاهاوين مصونة وبنية العدم مقرونة علم من الله تعالى بمال الامور واحاطة بحوادث الدهور ومعرفة بموقع المقدر ابتعثته الله تعالى اتماما لامرة وعزيزه على امضاء حكمه وانفاذها لمقاديره حتمه فرائى الا سم فرقا في اديانها عكنا على نيرانها عابدة لا وثنانها منكرة لله مع عرفانها فاذار الله تعالى بهي محمد (ص) ظالمها وكشف عن القلوب بهمها وجلى عن الا بصار غممها وقام في الناس بالهدایة وانقذهم من الغواية وبصوتهم من العمایة وهذا هم إلى الدين القويم



ودعاهم الى الصراط المستقيم ثم قبضه الله اليه قبض رانة و اختيار
 ورغبة و ايثار فمحمد (ص) عن تعب هذه الدار فى راحة قد حف
 بالملائكة الابرار و رضوان الرب الغفار و مجاورة الملك الجبار صلى الله
 على ابي نبیه و امینه على وحیه و صفیه و خیرتة من الخلق و رضیه
 والسلام عليه و رحمة الله و برکاته (ثم التفتت الى اهل المجلس
 وقالت) انتم عباد الله نصب امره و فیه و حملة دینه و وحیه
 و امناء الله على افسکم و ببلغواه الى الامم وزعیم حق له فيکم
 و عهد قدمم اليکم و بمقیتم استخلصها عليکم كتاب الله
 الناطق والقرآن الصادق والنور الساطع والضیاء اللامع بینة
 بصائره منکشفة سرائرة متجلیة ظواهره مغتبط به اشیاعه قائد
 الى الرضوان اتباعه موعد الى النجاة استماعه به تناول حجج الله المنورة
 و عزائم المفسرة و محارم المخذرة و بیناته الجالیة و براهینه
 الكافیة و فضائله المندوبة و رخصه الموهوبه و شرائعه المكتوبه فجعل
 الله الایمان تطهیرا لكم من الشرک والصلة تزییها لكم عن الكبر
 والزکاة تزکیة للنفس و فماء في الرزق والصیام تثبیتا للاء خلام والمحج
 تشییدا للدین والعدل تنسيقا للقلوب و طاعتنيا نظاماً للملة و امامتنا
 اماذا من الفرقة والجهاد عز اللہ الاسلام و دللاً اهل الكفر والنفاق والصبر
 معونة على استیجاب الاجر و لا من بالمعروف والنهی عن المنکر
 مصلحة للعامة و برالوالدین و قایة من السخط و صلة الارحام منسأة
 في العمر والقصاص حقنا للدماء والوفاء بالنذر تعريفا للمغفرة و
 توفیة المکاپیل والموازین تغییرا للبیخس والنهی عن شرب الخمر
 تزییها عن الرجس و اجتناب القذف حجاها عن اللعنة و ترك السرقة
 ایجابا للعنة و حرم الله الشرک اخلاصا له بالربوبیة (فاتقوا الله حق

تقate و لا تموتن الا و انت مسلمون) و اطیعوا الله فيما امرکم به
 و فھاکم عنہ (فاما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء) ثم قالت عليهما السلم
 "ايه الناس اعلموا انى فاطمة و ابى محمد (ص) اقول
 عودا و بدءا و لا اقول ما اقول غلطا و لا افعل ما افعل شططا
 (لقد جاءكم رسول من افسكم عزيز عليه ما عتقم حريص
 عليكم بالمؤمنين رزوف رحيم) فان تعرّفه و تعرفه تجدوه ابى
 دون نسائكم و اخا ابى عمى دون رجالكم و لنعم المعزى اليه
 فبلغ الرسالة صادعا بالنذارة مائلا عن مدرجة المشوكيين
 ضاربا ثيجهم آخذنا بکظمهم داعيا الى سبيل ربه بالحكمة
 والصوعطة الحسنة يكسر الاصنام و ينکت الهمام حتى اهزم
 الجم و ولوا الدبر حتى تفرى الليل عن صبحة و اسفر الحق عن
 محضه و نطق زعيم الدين و خرست شقاشق الشياطين و طاح
 و شيط النقاش و انحلت عقدة الكفر والشقاق و فهمتم بكلمة الاخلاص
 في ذنر من البيض الخامس و كنتم على شفا حفرة من النار مذقة الشارب
 و نهرة الطامع و قبسة العجلان و موطن الادم اشربون الطرق
 و تقتاتون القد ادلة خاسئين تخافون ان يتخطفكم الناس
 من حولكم فانقذكم الله تبارك و تعالى بابى محمد (ص) بعد
 اللتيا والتى وبعد ان منى بهم الرجال و ذوءان العرب و مرودة
 و اهل الكتاب (لما او قدوا نارا للحرب اطفاها الله) او نجم قرون
 للشيطان او فغرت فاغرة من المشوكيين كلما قذف اخاه في لمواهها فلا
 ينکفى حتى يطاً صماخها بأ خمسه و يخمد لمبها بسيفه مکدودا
 في ذات الله مجتهدا في امواله قریبا من رسول الله مسیدا في

اولياء الله مشمراً ناصحاً مجدداً كادحاً وانتم في رفاهية من العيش
 وادعون فاكرون آمنون تربصون بنا الدوائر و تتوكرون الاخبار
 وتنكرون عند النزال وتفرون من القتال فلما اختار الله لنبيه (ص)
 دار انبئائه وماً و ماً اصفيائه ظهرت فيكم حسيكة النفاق و سمل
 جلباب الدين (ونطق ظالم الغاريين ونبغ خامل الاقلين
 وهدر فنيق المبطلين فخطرو في عرصاتكم و اطلع الشيطان
 رأسه من مفرزة هاتفا بكم فألفاكم لدعوه مستجيبين وللغرة فيه
 ملاحظين ثم استنهضكم فوجدكم خفاناً واحمسكم فألفاكم غضاباً فوسمتم
 غيراً لكم او ردتم غير شريككم هذا والمعهد قريب والكلم رحيب
 والجرح لما يندمل والرسول لما يقبر ابتداراً زعمتم خوف الفتنة)
 ففيهات منكم وكيف بكم و انى توقفون و هذا كتاب الله بين اظهركم اموره
 ظاهرة و احكامها ظاهرة و زواجره لائحة و اوصمة واضحة
 قد خلقتها وراء ظهوركم ارغبة عنه تدبرون ام بغيره تحكمون (بدئس
 للظالمين بدلاً و من يبتغ غير الاسلام ديننا فلن يقبل منه وهو في
 الآخرة من الخاسرين) ثم لم تلبثوا الا ريثما تسكن نفترتها ويسلس
 قيادها ثم اخذتم تورون و قدمتها و تهيجون جمرتها و تستجيبون
 لهناف الشيطان الغوى واطفاء نور الدين الجلى و اهتماد سنن النبي
 الصفي تسرون حسوا في ارتقاء و تمشوں لاهله و ولده في الخمر
 والضراء و فصبر منكم على مثل حز المدى و وحز السنان في الحشى
 و انتم الان تزعمون ان لا ارث لي (انحكم الجاهلية يبغون ومن
 احسن من الله حكماً لقوم يوقنون) افلا تعلمون بلى قد تجعلى لكم
 كالشمس الضاحية انى ابنته ايها المسلمين اغلب على ارثي ويا

يا ابن قحافة اني كتاب الله ان ترث اباك ولا ارث ابى لقد جئت
 شيئاً فريا انعلى عمد تركتم كتاب الله ونبذتموه وراء ظوركم اذ
 يقول (ورث سليمان داود) وقال فيما اقتضى من خبر يحيى بن
 ذكريا عليهما السلام اذ يقول [رب هبلى من لدنك ولها يرثنى
 ويرث من آل يعقوب] وقال (وابوالارحام بعضهم اولى ببعض
 في كتاب الله) وقال (يوصيكم الله في اولادكم للذكر مثل حظ الافتىين)
 وقال (ان ترك خيراً ووصية للوالدين ولا قريبين بالمعروف حقاً على
 الامتنى) و زعمتم ان لا حظوة لي ولا ارث من ابى ولا رحم بيننا
 افخصكم الله باية اخرج منها ابى (من) ام تقولون اهل ملتين لا
 يتوارثان اودست اذا وابى من اهل ملة واحدة ام انت اعلم بخصوص
 القرآن و عمومه من ابى وابن عمى فدونكم مخطوطة مرحولة
 تلقاءك يوم حشرك فنعم الحكم الله والزعيم محمد والموعده القيامدة
 وعند الساعة يخسرون مبظلوون ولا ينفعكم اذتنبمون (ولكل ذبا مستقر
 وسوف تعلمون من يأتيه عذاب يخزيه ويحل عليه عذاب مقيم)
 ثم رفت بطفها نحو الانصار (فقالت) يا معاشر افتية واعضاد الملة
 وحصنة الاسلام ما هذه الغمiza في حقى والسنة عن ظلامتى اما كان
 رسول الله (من) ابى يقول (المرء يحفظ في ولده) سوعان ماحدثتم
 وعجلان ذا اهالة و لكم طاقة بما احاول و قوة على ما اطلب و
 از اول انقولون مات محمد فخطب جليل استوسع و هذه واستنمر
 فتفقه و اتفتق رتقه و اظلمت الارض لغيبته و اكتاًبته خيرة الله
 لمصيبة و كسفت الشمس والقمر و افتشت النجوم لمصيبة و اكدت

الامال و خشعت الجبال و اضيع العريم و ازيلت الحرمـة عند
 مماته فتكلـك والله النازلة الكـبرى والمـصيبة العـظمى التي لا مـثلـها
 نازـلة ولا بـائقـة عـاجـلة اـعلـن بهاـ كتاب الله جـل ثـنـاؤـه فـى اـفـنـيـتـكم فـى
 مـمـساـكـم و مـصـبـحـكـم هـتـافـا و صـراـخـا و تـلـوـة و الـحـانـا و لـقـبـلـه ماـ حـلـتـ
 بـاـنـبـيـاءـ الله و رـسـلـه حـكـم فـصـلـ و قـضـاءـ حـتـم (وـمـا مـحـمـدـ الاـ رـسـولـ
 قـدـ خـلـتـ مـنـ قـبـلـهـ الـوـسـلـ اـفـاـنـ مـاتـ اوـ قـتـلـ اـنـقـلـبـتـ عـلـىـ اـعـقـابـكـمـ
 وـمـنـ يـنـقـلـبـ عـلـىـ عـقـبـيـهـ فـلـنـ يـضـرـالـلـهـ شـيـاـ وـسـيـجـزـيـ اللـهـ الشـاكـرـيـنـ)
 اـيـهاـ بـهـنـىـ قـيـلـهـ الـهـضـمـ تـرـاثـ اـهـىـ وـاـنـتـمـ بـمـرـايـ مـنـىـ وـمـسـمـ وـمـتـنـدـىـ
 وـمـجـمـعـ تـلـبـسـكـمـ الدـعـوـةـ وـتـشـلـكـمـ الـخـيـرـةـ وـاـنـتـمـ ذـرـوـ الـعـدـدـ وـالـعـدـةـ
 وـالـادـةـ وـالـقـوـةـ وـعـنـدـكـمـ السـلـاحـ وـالـجـنـةـ تـوـافـيـكـمـ الدـعـوـةـ فـلـ تـجـيـبـوـنـ
 وـتـأـتـيـكـمـ الـصـرـخـةـ فـلـاـ تـغـيـرـيـوـنـ وـاـنـتـمـ مـوـصـفـوـنـ بـالـكـفـاحـ مـعـرـوـفـوـنـ بـالـخـيـرـ
 وـالـصـلـاحـ وـالـنـخـبـةـ التـىـ اـنـتـخـبـتـ وـالـخـيـرـةـ التـىـ اـخـتـيـرـتـ لـنـاـ اـهـلـ الـبـيـتـ
 قـاتـلـتـ الـعـرـبـ وـتـحـمـلـتـ الـكـدـوـالـتـعـبـ وـنـاطـحـتـ الـاـمـ وـكـافـحـتـ
 الـبـمـ فـلـاـ نـبـرـحـ وـتـبـرـحـوـنـ ذـاـمـرـكـمـ فـتـأـتـمـرـوـنـ حـتـىـ اـذـ دـارـتـ بـنـارـحـىـ
 الـاسـلـامـ وـدـرـ حـلـبـ الـاـيـامـ وـخـضـعـتـ نـعـرـةـ الشـرـكـ وـسـكـنـتـ فـوـرـةـ الـاـ
 فـكـ وـخـمـدـتـ نـيـرـاـنـ الـكـشـرـ (وـبـاـخـتـ وـهـدـاتـ دـعـوـةـ الـهـرـجـ وـاـسـتـوـسـقـ
 نـظـامـ الـدـيـنـ فـأـنـىـ حـرـتـ بـعـدـ الـبـيـانـ وـاسـرـتـمـ بـعـدـ الـاعـلـانـ وـنـكـصـتـمـ
 بـعـدـ الـاـقـدـامـ وـاـشـرـكـتـمـ بـعـدـ الـاـيـمـانـ بـوـسـاـ لـقـوـمـ فـكـثـرـاـ اـيـمـاـنـهـمـ
 وـهـمـوـ بـاـخـرـاجـ الرـوـسـوـلـ وـهـمـ بـدـوـكـمـ اـوـلـ مـرـةـ اـتـخـشـوـفـهـمـ
 فـالـلـهـ اـحـقـ تـخـشـوـهـ اـنـ كـتـمـ مـوـءـمـنـيـنـ الـاـقـدـارـيـ اـنـ قـدـ اـخـلـدـتـمـ
 الـلـهـ اـحـقـ وـاـنـدـعـوـهـ اـنـ هـوـاـحـقـ بـالـبـسـطـ وـالـقـبـيـفـ وـرـكـتـمـ

الى الدعوة و فجوتكم من الضيق بالسعة فمجتكم ما وعيتكم
 و دسعتم الذي تسوغتم (فان تكفروا افتم و من فى الارض جميعا
 فان الله لغنى حميد) الا وقد قلت ما قلت على معرفة منى
 بالخذلة التى خامرتم و الغدرة التى استشعرتها قلوبكم
 ولكنها فيضة النفس و بثة الصدر و فتنة الغيط و تقدمة الحجة
 فد و فكموها فاحتقبوها دبرة الظهر نقية الخف باقية العار موسومة
 بغضب الله و شمار الا بد مو صولة ب النار الله المقدة التى تطلع
 على الافئدة فبعين الله ما تتعلون (وسيعلم الذين ظلموا اى
 منقلب ينقلبون) و اذا ابنته ذيير لكم بين يدي عذاب شديد
 (فاعملوا انا عاملون و انتظروا انا منتظرون) انتهى



THE SERMON OF FATIMA.

This is a sermon of Fatima which is considered to be one of the best sermons and which deals also with the importance of the prophethood of Mohammad. It has been copied both by friends and foes alike from the book *Saqifa*, Omar, son of *Shaiba*, compiled by Abu Bakr Ahmed, son of Abdul Azeez Jauhari. It must be noted that Imam Jauhari copied it from an old manuscript and then he read it to Omar, son of *Shaiba*, in 322 A. H. and he has described it in many ways on the authority of the reporters. When Fatima came to know that Abu Bakr had refused to give her inheritance, she covered herself in a sheet of cloth and started for the mosque with her relations, friends and slave-girls. Her sheet was wavering and her legs were trembling and stumbling. Her gait at that time resembled that of the Prophet very closely. She reached Abu Bakr. He was sitting with the Muhajireen and the Ansar. A sheet of cloth was hung between the audience and Fatima by a Copt. Fatima heaved a deep sigh. All the audience began to weep. She kept quiet. When all became quiet, she said : "I begin with the name of God who deserves all praise. He is charitable. He deserves all praise for the blessings He has conferred upon us. The good we do is due to Him. He has done much good to us for which He is praised. We cannot even think of His kindness. It is beyond our power to give Him due praise. He is infinite. We are quite helpless. God bestows upon us His blessings both individually and collectively.

I tell you truly and sincerely that there is but one God. He is matchless and has no equal. He has ordered us to have faith in one God. He has willingly taken upon Himself the responsibility of rewarding or punishing us in the next world according to our actions good or bad we do here. His arguments are very convincing. None can see Him. None can properly praise Him. He is beyond imagination. God has made everything. He stands unique in the creation of this world. He has not created anything for His own use except for the manifestation of His power, so that when people see them, they may become obedient and submissive and thus increase their honour. He has promised to reward those who obey Him implicitly and unflinchingly and to punish those who disobey Him. He has made Heaven and Hell for this purpose.

I also witness that my father, Mohammad, was his Messenger and Prophet. He had selected him for the prophethood right from the very beginning of the creation of this world. Before making him a Prophet He said that he was the best of men and he had been nominated for the prophetship long before making him a Prophet.

My father came into this world. He found the followers of the preceding Prophets worshippers of idols, fire, etc. They had forgotten God. He enlightened this world through Mohammad. Darkness, ignorance, and corruption were removed. When my father got tired

of this world, he was called back to Him and was made to sit amongst good angels. His position was highly exalted. O followers of the Prophet ! you are the champions who invite to good and forbid the wrong and you are the persons who have accepted His revelations. You are the people who carry His message to peoples. You are the people who have made covenant with God. It is amongst you that He has placed Prophet's remnants. It is the same revealed book of God in which He has illumined the right way and the secrets of the verses therein are apparent with which we, the progeny of the Holy Prophet, possess open guidance. The contents of this book are explanatory. Its broad injunctions are quite evident, the miracle of which is always being performed and which leads us to the highest heaven. Its acceptance guides us to salvation. Every reason that is contained in the Book is quite evident. It is filled with admonitions. We are afraid of the forbidden things that are contained in the book. Its every ordinance is sufficient and pertinent. The light of those orders enlightens the hearts. The blessings of the Quran cured every invalid. Its standard is stationary. Its orders are sanctioned by God. Therefore God made the belief obligatory. He has made Zakat obligatory to save you from pride and arrogance. In order to multiply the sources of your income He ordained pilgrimage upon you. He has also made the obedience of the Ahlul-Bait obligatory upon you. You have to accept our guidance to increase the prestige of Islam and to sink your differences. You are ordered to have patience so that your prayer may

be accepted. God has ordered you to serve your parents so that you may escape the chastisement of God. You are ordered to support your family so that you, your nation and tribe may prosper. To fulfil one's duty has been ordained by God so that your steps may proceed towards self-sacrifice and blessing. To measure fully has been ordered so that corruption and deception may come to an end. Women are ordained to observe purdah to save their chastity. Theft has been prohibited to maintain honesty. The property of the orphans has been made unlawful to save them from oppression and cruelty. Monotheism has been ordained to save people from polytheism. O Muslims ! fear God. Obey His orders. I am the daughter of the Prophet. I let you know that I do not talk in vain. The Prophet was very kind and sympathetic. He told you the message of God. He fought with the non-believers. He broke the idols and the temples. He beheaded the heads of the arrogant with swords. He consoled and satisfied the people with admonitions. The darkness of the infidelity was replaced by the light of Islam.

The infidels and non-believers had to hold their tongues. O Arabs! before the advent of Islam in Arabia, your condition was very pitiable and miserable. Every one was greedy to rule over you. You were leading a very bad life. You were always in danger of some foreign attacks. My father through the blessings of God, relieved you of all these difficulties and troubles. Then some brave Arabs and savage Jews and Christians

attacked you but Ali endangering his life saved you from their destructive and ruinous attacks every time. Later on they had to yield. The companions of the Prophet were always with him and were prepared to sacrifice their lives for Islam. They always acted upon the injunctions of the Quran and they accompanied the Prophet in every war without fail. They bore all sorts of difficulties and troubles patiently.

What about you now? Your hearts are not clear. They are filled with evil and mischievous intentions. Satan has overtaken you. You are now again under his firm control. You obey his orders without any 'ifs' and 'buts.' No sooner did the Prophet die than you again began to follow those evil practices prevalent in Arabia before the advent of Islam. I do not know where Satan is misleading you although the Quran is amongst you. It seems that you have ceased to take interest in this Holy Book. But believe me that if you forget the Quran, you shall reap the consequences of your folly in the next world. You are bringing ruin and destruction to Islam.

You are injuring the family members of the Prophet. We are patiently bearing these troubles. You think that I have no share in the inheritance of my father. Do you not recognise my worth? You know my rights.

O *Muhajireen*, can you tolerate the injustice done to me? O son of *Abu Qahafa*, is it written in the book of God that you should get the property of your

father and I must be deprived of this privilege? God says: "Solomon got inheritance from David." Yahya, son of Zakariya said: "O God! give me a child who may inherit my and Jacob's property." She said: "Do you think that I am an exception to the above verses of the Quran and hence you deprive me of enjoying this privilege?" She found none taking up her cause and then she said: "O Abu Bakr! you may perforce take the property of Fadak from me but you shall have to answer for it on the day of Judgment."

She then turned to the Ansar and said: "O brave persons! you are the supporters of Islam but you are lazy in my affairs. Injustice is done to me and you are silent. Are you giving up Islam? You can help me if you wish. The death of my father has brought about untold and incalculable loss. O Ansar! do you want to see me deprived of the inheritance of my father? You have power enough to protect me. You were noted for your bravery, courage and manliness. You fought great wars and took leading part in them. You rendered meritorious services to the cause of Islam. But now you are perplexed and going astray."

Fatima saw that her stirring and heart-rending speech fell flat upon the audience. She then said: "I do not care for these worldly gains or losses. You are doing much harm to me. You shall be punished for it on the day of Judgment. Wait and see."

PART XIV.

THE VAST KNOWLEDGE OF FATIMA.

ALL the characteristics and good qualities of Fatima, which have already been mentioned in the previous chapters and many more which I hope I will be able to point out in the following are, in fact, the shoots of knowledge, because knowledge is the fountain head of all traits.

The Quranic verse known as "Aya-i-Tathir" speaks of Fatima. This excellent verse proves that Fatima's knowledge was of the vastest and of the best. The verse although small in itself, definitely proves that she was most learned and full of knowledge.

Although Fatima had such great wisdom, she was never one to boast of what she knew and of all she knew. Her humbleness together with her great knowledge, is one of the many striking points in her character.

Sadiq relates that the Holy Prophet often used to mention incidents regarding her knowledge. Sometime he would say: "I am like a scale, divided into three parts, Fatima one part, Ali another, and Hasan and Husain the third part. Ali represents the two trays of the scale, one that holds the weights, and the other, the material to be weighed. Hasan and Husain

represent the chains that hold up the trays ; and Fatima is the firm bar, the most important part that holds the scale."

The Prophet also used to say that Fatima's knowledge was so vast that he did not think there was anything that she did not know. Jafar says that before Fatima was born, an angel appeared to the Holy Prophet and told him that the child to be born would be a girl and that God wished her to be called 'Fatima.' He also told the Prophet that she would be a child born full of knowledge.

Another great proof of the knowledge of Fatima is the book which is called 'Mushaf-e-Fatima.' This book is a tale in itself. It is said that after the death of the Holy Prophet, Ali used to be very busy; during these periods Fatima used to be very lonely, so lonely at times that she would feel quite miserable. God then started sending angels down from Heaven to converse with her. The neighbours could not understand it, for although they knew Fatima was quite alone in the house, they could quite distinctly hear her talking to somebody. They were beginning to think that perhaps she was getting slightly mentally deranged. When Ali returned home once, they mentioned this to him. Ali asked Fatima about it and she explained to him that when he was away from her she used to feel very lonely and that God took pity on her loneliness and used to send angels to talk to her. Fatima asked him to listen, and true enough, after a while

a conversation was so full of knowledge that Ali felt compelled to take it down, and all that he recorded is known as the book 'Mushaf-e-Fatima' and the language and style of the book, the knowledge and great wisdom of which it is full, makes it a book well worth reading. This book is known as the conversation that took place between God and Fatima, through the agency of the angel and was recorded by Ali.

It is said that Fatima always knew beforehand when a thing was going to happen ; so it was in the case of the death of the Holy Prophet, also that of Hasan and Husain. In the matter of warfare also, she always knew when and where a battle would take place and also the result of the war.

She knew the right way to do everything, and many a time, women many years senior to her would come to her for help and advice. As I mentioned before, although Fatima was so wise, she was not proud of her knowledge. She was one of the simplest and humblest of women.

FATIMA'S DISPLEASURE :—It is a well known fact that Fatima never got angry or lost her temper. Those who displeased her were always punished. There are many sayings of the Holy Prophet, from which it is apparent that those who tried to evoke anger in Fatima or displeased her in any way were doomed. Sulman Farsi says that the Prophet once said that those who loved Fatima and pleased her would

surely go to Heaven, and those who did otherwise would go to Hell. On another occasion Prophet said : " The love of Fatima is a blessing that will help at all times, the time of death in the grave and on the day of Judgment, and they need have no fear, but with those who displease her, it will be otherwise." Another time the Prophet was heard to say : " I am pleased with one who has pleased Fatima, and God is always pleased with one who has pleased me." Then again there is the famous saying : " Whoever has displeased Fatima has displeased me." Every time any one hurt Fatima or displeased her in any way, sooner or later that person was punished. For instance, take the case of those who tried to make mischief between Fatima and Ali soon after their marriage. Their lies and false rumours were making Fatima unhappy and every one of them got their punishment in due time.

Another time, Fatima had no grain or money in the house, the children were beginning to get hungry ; also it was time for Ali to come home, and Fatima knew he also would be hungry on his return. So leaving the children with a neighbour, she hurried to the grain merchant and asked him to give her some grain, telling him that she would give him the money later. The man refused and told her she could only have the grain if she paid for it immediately. Fatima turned away in despair, and luckily a kind neighbour had some food to spare and sent it across, and thus they were able to appease their hunger. But the grain

merchant did not escape punishment ; everyone seemed to shun his shop and he lived the rest of his life in poverty.

One day little Husain was playing in front of the house, a man passing in a hurry, pushed against him and knocked him down. Husain bruised his knee and started crying, but the man walked on without troubling to pick the little chap up. Fatima watched this from the window and felt hurt that anyone could have the heart to be so cruel to a little child. She brought him in and attended to his leg. A little later, Ali returned home and he told Fatima that at the corner of the street, as a man was walking along, a brick had fallen on him and injured him severely. Ali described the man and what he was wearing, and Fatima knew he was the same one who had been unkind to Husain.

There are many more such instances as would take too long to relate here and all prove that those who displeased Fatima, displeased not only the Holy Prophet but God Himself.

THE HELP-MATES OF FATIMA :—I have already mentioned in the previous chapter some instances when Divine help was given to Fatima. The poverty of the house of Fatima is well known. It was very seldom she was able to keep a maid. But God loved her so dearly, that there were many angels kept in readiness to help her at all times.

I have already related the incident when the grinding stone was seen grinding the wheat by itself while Fatima lay sleeping ; it was really done by an angel whom God sent to do the work unseen.

There are scores of instances when angels were sent down to the earth to be of assistance to Fatima. The angel Gabriel himself attended to many of her needs. Many people are under the impression that Gabriel only attended upon the Prophet. But that is not the fact ; he attended to Fatima as well. In fact Gabriel himself asked God, when Fatima was born, to allow him to be of service to the Holy Prophet as well as to his daughter.

Although outwardly Fatima was extremely poor, in richness of heart she was indeed great. The little she had, she would give when called upon, in such a generous manner that the observers could not help being astonished. Often she had absolutely nothing for herself and the other left, but she knew God would always help her in her hours of need.

As the life story is unfolded before us, we realise the kind and true woman she was ; it was her wonderful kindness that had won all hearts, her greatness that won her the everlasting respect.

The great man—her father—the Holy Prophet himself respected her above all women. It is well known that when ever Fatima went to see him, if he happened to be seated, he would rise at once and go

forward to meet her—a great mark of respect in itself for it is a thing he did not do for anyone else. It was also his habit when going out to go and kiss Fatima 'Good Bye' last, and on returning to go and kiss her first. All these prove there must have been something in her greatness—to draw such respect from such a great man as the Prophet.

Even other great men, although not knowing who she was when they saw her veiled figure, showed some sign of respect. There was something about her that radiated her greatness.

Another important thing about Fatima—that one could not help noticing that she was always happy as bird—during the hardest of times she always worked happy and content. She had a loving father and beloved husband, and wonderful children, and that was all she wanted. Although during childhood she had great sorrow, she was deprived of a loving mother at a very early age. But she put aside her sorrow and was instead a happy wife and daughter loving and loved.

It meant untold pleasure to her to be of service to anyone. However big or however small it may be, she was the happiest one helping some one in distress or giving her all to some poor hungry soul. Her one great thought was the good of all and to that end she worked—and most successfully.

Her great goodness was repaid by the help of God at all times. I have already related in previous chapters many instances of this. This assistance was given ever she was born—it must be remembered that at the time of her birth her mother turned to her own kith and kin to come to help her but they refused as she had married the Prophet against their wishes ; but she was not left alone in her hour of need. God sent many angels and holy women from Heaven to help her.

Another time when Divine assistance was given to Fatima, Hasan was a baby of one year old. One day Ali was out. He had gone on business a long distance. Hasan had not been very well the whole day, but an hour or two after Ali's departure he looked very bad. Fatima was most worried, for she was all alone. Soon two women entered the house and helped Fatima with the child. They also gave him something from a bottle which they had brought with them, and very soon the child was very much better. Shortly after that, Ali returned and Fatima was surprised, for she had not expected him so soon. Then Ali told her that while he was on the way he heard a voice say three times 'Go home.' So he returned. As the business was not of great importance he did not go again until the child was quite well.

I will now in a few words describe the house of Fatima. It could almost be said that the house of the Holy Prophet was also the house of Fatima, for there was only a thin wall dividing the two. It is understood that Fatima's house was of the humblest but it

could be said to be the very greatest of houses, for it is said that it had an opening in one of the rooms that led straight to the throne of God. This passage was most often used by the angels when they are sent down to help Fatima or bring message to her from God.

The house was not large and the rooms were mostly bare except for a few pieces of furniture that were absolutely essential. However busy she may be, Fatima made it a point of duty to keep the whole house spotlessly clean. Not a speck of dust was to be seen anywhere, and all cooking utensils etc., were always kept clean and shining brightly. Although they had not many clothes, the few they had, were always spotlessly clean. Never was either Hasan or Husain seen in clothes that were even slightly soiled.

People used to say it was greater pleasure to enter Fatima's house than any place adorned with gold and silver, and this was a fact, the very bareness of the walls seem to make them glitter like jewels.

Very often there was no money in the house to buy oil for the lamp, but the house was never seen to be in darkness at night for the lamp used to be so beautifully polished, that it used to give out a lovely glow that lit up the whole house.

The passage that led from one of the rooms to the throne of God was not made visible to every body; only the most privileged ones ever saw it. It is said that it looked like a golden way and the floor was covered

with gold dust. One day one of the neighbours, who had heard something of this golden passage, wanted to satisfy her curiosity and see it for herself. So she went to Fatima's house, although she did not tell Fatima the reason of her visit. Fatima knew very well why she wandered from room to room, but because she was unworthy, the passage was invisible to her. She was greatly disappointed and went around telling everyone that there was no truth whatever in the story of the passage. God knew what she was about, so to make her realise her mistake one night she had a dream in which she saw the sacred passage, and God spoke to her in stern tone and told her that never again was she to doubt anything she heard about Fatima.

THE PRAYERS AND SAINTLINESS OF FATIMA.

Fatima by virtue of her birth and knowledge was the saintliest woman ever born. Some of her very names express this side of her character, for instance, Sadiq relates that one day some body asked Ali why Fatima had been given the name 'Zahra' and he explained that wherever she stood up to say her prayers, her face used to shine like the rays of the sun.

Another authority also relates that one day he asked Sadiq why the name 'Zahra' had been given to Fatima and the reply was as follows :—

"Because her face used to shine most beautifully three times a day. The first time it was in the morning when she used to say her prayers it used to shine to such an extent that all the houses in Medina used to be lit up, as if by the light of the full moon; often people would wonder what wonderful light it was and many used to go to the Prophet and ask him the meaning of the light, and always he would ask them to go to the house of Fatima, and they used to be astonished to see the source of the light. The second time it used to be in the after-noon when her face used to shine. This time the light would be of a lovely pale yellow colour and the third time, it was at sunset when the light from her face would have a pretty red glow. This could not have been anything but the reflection of the love of God, which in its intensity used to manifest itself on her face."

Once, at midnight, Ali awoke from sleep to find a beautiful bright light in the room. He looked round to see what had caused it and he found Fatima saying prayers in the middle of the room and the light was from her face that looked like a beautiful full moon. He asked her why she had got up at that time of the night to pray and she answered that she felt that there were some poor souls needing prayers.

Another time little Husain ran to the Holy Prophet and said to him: "It is so beautiful that it brings tears to my eyes" and the Prophet replied what

was so beautiful : for answer the child caught the Prophet's hand and led him to the house. On entering, Husain pointed to Fatima, who was saying her prayers and on her face there shone a most beautiful light.

It is commonly known that Fatima would sometimes remain in prayer for days at a time, even the swelling of her feet would not deter her from her purpose and steadfastness. Once she started praying for some special reason, nothing could interrupt her. She would remain praying for days.

Imam Husain relates that one day she stood up to say her prayers—it was evening and she continued saying prayers until the next night. She was saying the prayers aloud and he says, all the time he heard her, she was praying for the true believers. The next day Husain says he asked why she always prayed so much for others, and never for herself. To this Fatima replied : "Look to the soul and happiness of thy neighbour before you look to yourself." It is easy to utter such words, but always very difficult to practise them. But Fatima was one of the very few who never failed to do so.

Many other people also relate the way Fatima prayed and all her prayers were for others. She would pray to God for hours, to grant people the power to face all hardships in the name of truth, to grant them

power to face adversity with courage. She used to stand on one attitude for hours at a time, praying for both the rich and the poor alike.

It is truly said that those who are learned know when to fear God. It is the fear of God in the heart of a person that will never allow him to go astray. Fear not in the sense that God is something fearful, but the fear of doing that which God hath declared to be wrong. In every act, word, thought, or deed, if to think it is pleasing to God—is to fear God really and this was always the case with this wonderful daughter of the Prophet, before doing anything, however small, she always thought first whether it would be pleasing or displeasing to God.

"I am leaving ~~two~~ heavy things amongst ye" the Prophet said, "if ye hold them fast, ye shall never go astray: the book of God and Ahl-ul-Bait." (i.e., the Prophets progeny, through Ali, his cousin and son-in-law. (Muslim.)

PART XV.

 THE QURANIC VERSES IN RESPECT
 OF FATIMA.

THERE are many verses in the Holy Quran, which speak of the greatness of Fatima and her family, for instance :—

“ Abraham is among their followers.....”

The explanation of this verse has been given by the Holy Prophet himself. In doing so, he says : “ When God created Abraham he made him see the earth and Heaven. Abraham saw in Heaven a bright shining light, the like of which he had never seen before. He asked God the meaning of the light ; and God replied that it was the essence of Mohammad. Abraham then asked whose essence was next to that of Mohammad and God replied that it was that of Ali. Abraham then looking round noticed a third light, and he again questioned God as to the nature of that light, and God replied that it was that of Fatima. Very near the light of Fatima was noticed two smaller lights and Abraham asked what they meant and God replied that they were the essences of Hasan and Husain, the two sons of Fatima. Abraham then noticed that these five important lights were encircled by nine other lights. Again he asked God to tell him what those nine lights were for, and God replied that they

were the essences of the progeny of Fatima *viz* : (1) Ali, (2) Mohammad, (3) Jafar, (4) Moosa, (5) Ali, (6) Mohammad, (7) Ali, (8) Husan, (9) Mehdi. Abraham then asked God how the followers of these would be recognised and the Divine reply was, the followers would be recognised by the fact that, “(1) they will kneel down to say their prayers five times a day (2) that they will call aloud the name of God each time they will kneel down (3) that before kneeling down they would raise their hands to their ears (4) that they will give thanksgiving and (5) that they will always wear a ring on their right hand.” Abraham then showed his head and requested God to count him as one of the followers and God replied that his request was granted.

It is mentioned in *Tafsir Imam Hasan Askari* thus: “When the Israelites felt thirsty and found that no water was to be found anywhere in the desert to quench their thirst, they all went weeping to Moses and told him they were all dying of thirst. Then Moses fell on his knees and prayed to God thus: “O God Almighty! for the sake of Mohammad, the King of Prophets—for the sake of Ali the link of God—for the sake of Fatima, the queen of all women, for the sake of Hasan, the king of saints—for the sake of Husain, the king of martyrs, provide the means to quench the thirst of my people.” God then told Moses to find a stone and hit it with his rod. Moses did so and streams of water began to flow out of it.

(3) "Reclining therein (Heaven) raised couches they shall find. Therein (Heaven) they shall find neither the severe heat of the sun, nor intense cold." (Quran).

Explaining this verse, Ibn Abbas says that when the people are seated in their abodes in Heaven, they will see a bright light, which will make the whole of Heaven aglow with its brightness. The people will then turn to go and ask him what this light was as he promised them that the light of the sun would not penetrate into Heaven. Whereupon God will reply thus : "This is neither the light of the sun nor that of the moon, but it is the light caused by the laughter of Fatima and Ali."

(4) "In houses which Allah has permitted to be erected, and that His name may be remembered in them ; they glorify him therein in the mornings and evenings." (XXIV, 5, 36.)

Abbas writes that one day they were in the mosque; after prayers one of the followers recited the above verse, whereupon the Holy Prophet was asked which were the houses referred to by God in the verse. The Prophet replied that the houses referred to in the verse were the houses of the gone-by Prophets and also that of Fatima." (Behar-ul-Anwar. Vol. V. p. 90.)

It is written in the same book (from the authority of *Muslim*) that one day the Prophet recited the above verse and one of the followers asked him.

which houses were referred to. The Prophet replied that they were the houses of the Prophets gone by. Then Abu Bakr stood up and pointing to the house of Fatima asked if her house also was one referred to in the verse and the Prophet said that it was.

★ But Muhammad Ali in his foot-note to his translation of the Quran, page 704 writes :—“The Divine light spoken of in the last verse is here stated as being met with in certain houses, the distinctive mark of those houses being that the name of Allah is remembered in them, thus showing that these houses are the houses of the Muslims, and the light is, therefore, the light of Islam. These houses, we are further told, though humble now, shall be exalted one day, as Allah has so ordained. And the exaltation of the humble huts of the Arab dwellers of the deserts to royal palaces is too clear to need any comment as to the truth of this wonderful prophecy.”

One of the followers asked the Prophet to inform him who were the great beings mentioned in the above verse and the Prophet replied : “Myself, Fatima, Ali Hasan and Husain.” There are various verses in the Quran which one can pick out, with references to Fatima, and one can see that they all speak of the daughter of the Holy Prophet.

THE DOWRY OF FATIMA.—It is said that the dowry of Fatima was five hundred silver pieces, but very few seem to have heard of the great Heavenly dowry bestowed upon her by God.

★ Mr. Muhammad Ali of Lahore and not the late Maulana Mohammad Ali, the brother of Shaukat Ali.

One day Umme-Aiman came to the Prophet. She had something tied up in the end of her shawl. The Prophet seeing it asked her what it was she had tied there. She replied that she had been to a wedding and the bride's people had showered riches amongst the people and she had managed to pick up one gold piece. She then turned to the Prophet with tears in her eyes and said that on the occasion of Fatima's marriage, he had not showered anything. The Prophet then told her, that on the day Fatima was married, God had ordered the trees in Heaven to shower diamonds, rubies, emeralds and other precious stones, and that each one of the angels in Heaven had collected enough to rouse the envy of the very greatest monarch on earth; so what was the need to shower a few handfuls of gold, when such wealth had been scattered for her in Heaven.

Another time, someone told the Prophet that he was aware that Fatima's dowry was five hundred silver pieces. But he would like to be told what her heavenly dowry was and the Prophet replied that God had given her one fifth of the world on her wedding day.

The day after Fatima's wedding, as the Prophet was going to the mosque, an old beggar who showed him a lovely ruby, asked the Prophet what he was to do with it and the Prophet told him that it was a precious stone by the sale of which he could make himself rich. The Prophet then asked the old man

where he got it from and the beggar replied that on the previous day as he was sitting at the gates of the mosque, the stone had fallen from Heaven above. The Prophet then told him that that day had been Fatima's wedding day and as a dowry, God had ordered all the trees in Heaven to scatter precious stones and as he was a good man, God had let one fall into his tray as a reward for his goodness.

It is also said that on Fatima's wedding day the Prophet and the people heard a strange sound above. On looking up they beheld what looked like little specks of blue, yellow and green gold flying about. They hurried to the Prophet and told him about it and he told them not to worry, as it was only Fatima's Heavenly dowry being scattered by the angels.

On Fatima's wedding day, a child was born in the neighbourhood with two pieces of gold in his hand. It was because God was so pleased that he gave gold pieces to all children born on that day.

So we see, that although Fatima's earthly dowry was not much, her Heavenly dowry was vast indeed. If she wished she could have had all the riches in Heaven and need never have poverty at all, but she chose hardships instead, because she knew she would be pleasing God by doing so.

THE PRESENTS RECEIVED FROM GOD BY FATIMA.—Already I have said a great deal about the favours Fatima received from God. Meals

from Heaven were served during times of need etc : But as there are many more instances, I shall write a few more here for the benefit and spiritual elevation of the reader.

One day the Holy Prophet went to the house of Fatima and told her that he wished to have his meals with them that day. Fatima was taken aback, for it happened to be one of their hard days ; so she replied that she was very sorry, for she had not a morsel of food in the house. The Prophet in spite of what she said, sat down and requested Fatima, Ali and the two children also to do the same. Fatima was very much upset, when suddenly the angel Gabriel appeared and told the Prophet that God wished to know what each of them would like to have for a meal. None of them replied but Husain said he would like to order for all. The order being given, he said he would like fresh dates to be served. The Prophet then said that God knew of the wish of Husain and that it had already been met. He then asked Fatima to go into the next room and bring the tray and when she returned the Prophet rose and took it from her. He then picked up dates and gave one to each. He then got up and sat down ; they then ate the dates and the tray again disappeared. The Prophet's behaviour had surprised all present and Fatima asked her father what it all meant. The Prophet replied that when he put the first date in Husain's mouth, he heard two angels praising and he repeated the words they had used and when he put the second

date in Hasan's mouth, he heard two other angels praising and he also repeated the words after them. He then put the third date in Fatima's mouth and this time he heard all the angels in Heaven praising and he repeated what they said, and when he put the fourth date in Ali's mouth he heard God Himself praising and felt to hear that voice again. He had also put the fifth date in Ali's mouth. He then praised God and went home. (Behar-el-Anwar.)

Jabir Ansari writes that one day the angel Gabriel brought an orange to the Prophet and said it was a present from God. The Prophet divided the orange into five parts, one he ate himself and the other four he gave to Fatima, Ali, Hasan and Husain. Umme Salma who was present said: "I am your wife. Why have you not given me my share of the orange?" The Prophet then replied: "If the angel Gabriel had not expressed that it was for me and my progeny only I would most certainly have shared it with you also."

One day the Prophet was in the mosque surrounded by his followers, when a patch of cloud appeared fast above them; from the cloud Heavenly music floated down. The followers wondered what this could mean and turned to the Prophet for advice. The Prophet replied that the cloud was the bearer of a present from God and stretched out his hand and opened it. There was a shining and sparkling piece of glass in it. The glass then began to speak saying the following words:

"Praise be to thee O Prophet of God. Praise be to thy cousin Ali, who is a light for the beseechers and guide for the seekers. Praise be to thy daughter, the queen of all women, and praise be to thy grandchildren." The glass then said that it was a gift sent to the Prophet, Fatima, Ali, Hasan and Husain, and asked to be taken to each one in turn. The Prophet did as the glass had requested and after it had been returned to his hand after the round had been completed, it again disappeared into the cloud, which slowly drifted out of sight taking the sound of Heavenly music with it.

Then one of the followers said to the Prophet:— "O Prophet ! whatever you get from God, you do not share with any one else except your cousin Ali, your daughter Fatima, and your grand children, but you do not share it with us." To this the Prophet replied: "I do so because God had ordered that the presents from Him are only to be shared by the five of us. When the glass came to my hand you all heard it say the same thing itself." After that the followers were silent.

Besides trays of food from Heaven, Fatima also received other gifts from God. For instance, I have already mentioned, that at times lovely clothes and jewelry were sent to her. The time when she was invited to the wedding of the wealthy Jew, she had nothing but her poor old clothes, but God sent her such fine clothes and expensive jewelry that she was the best dressed woman at the ceremony.

I have related the incident in detail in a previous chapter, the motive for the Jew's invitation etc, so there is no need to repeat it again but I will first mention here that on such occasions Fatima never kept these fine things with her. She always implored God to take them back again saying that all that finery was too much for a humble person like herself.

THE POSITIONS OF THE SERVANTS OF FATIMA. Those fortunate women who at times had the honour of being in the service of Fatima, had their positions enhanced by the fact, not only among the people, but also in the eyes of God, as will be illustrated by a few examples given below.

One day Malik Ibn Dimar was on his way to Mecca on pilgrimage. He had only gone a short way along the desert, when he overtook an old woman who was riding a starved and half dead camel, which looked about to drop down with exhaustion. The old woman was also on her way to Mecca. Malik stopped and told the woman of the futility of going on an animal that could hardly walk. He advised her to retrace her steps and go back home. The old lady was obstinate and refused to listen, with the result that a few yards further on, the camel collapsed in a heap on the ground. Malik then approached the woman and told her that she should have listened to what he said and gone home. The woman did not reply to him, but raising her hands towards Heaven she prayed thus: "O God! neither you have let me remain in my house, nor have

you allowed me to reach yours. If any one else had treated me thus, I would have complained to you about it, but now to whom shall I complain?" Hardly had the woman finished uttering these words, when a man was seen approaching them leading a healthy fine camel. The man coming up to the old woman handed her the camel and told her to continue her journey to Mecca on it. Some time later, Malik met the old lady. One day he went up and asked who she was and whence she came. The woman replied that many many years before, her grand-mother had been a maid of Fatima and since then God always helped any member of the family in the hour of need.

After the death of Fatima, Umm-e-Aiman, decided to leave Medina as the place was so full of the memorials of Fatima that she could not bear it. So she decided to go away to Mecca. On her way she grew very thirsty and there was no water to be had any where in the desert. She continued a little way more, but she was so thirsty that she could hardly walk. She then fell on her knees and prayed to God thus: "O God ! I was the servant of Fatima. Thirst is killing me. For her sake, save me." No sooner had she finished saying this, than she saw a bucket of water coming from Heaven. The bucket stopped at her feet and Umm-e-Aiman drank deep of the lovely cool water. She then continued on her way thanking God. It is said that after the incident, for the next seven years she knew what it was to feel hungry or thirsty.

Another time, a maid of Fatima was sent out by her to get some grain from the market. It was noon and the streets were more or less deserted. As the maid hurried along, she saw a mad dog approaching. As she was the only one in the street, the dog seeing her, made straight for her. The maid was almost paralysed with fear. She prayed to God: "O God ! Fatima has sent me out. I am her maid." As she said these words, the huge dog that was almost on her, changed into a bird and flew right over her head.

Very many years after the death of Fatima, there was a family in Medina who seemed to be very unfortunate. They lost a good deal of money and soon were in dire poverty. One day a small boy belonging to the household was sent out to gather some firewood. As the child picked the sticks in the jungle, tears rolled down his cheeks, for the little boy was hungry as he had no meal all day. Suddenly an old woman appeared and asked the boy what made him cry on such a fine day. The boy replied that he was hungry, in fact, all in his house were hungry, for there was no money to buy any food. The man gave the child an apple and some dates and asked him what his mother's name was. The boy stood up proudly and said: "My mother was called Fatima by her mother because very many years ago, a relation of ours was a maid to the great Fatima, the daughter of the Holy Prophet." On hearing this the old man gave the child a bag and said: "Give this to your mother and you all will never

again be in want." The bag contained gold pieces and it is said that soon after, that family was one of the richest in Medina.

One day a child was born; the mother for many days had been too ill to be able to feed the child. The relatives were at a loss as to what to do for they did not know how to nourish the baby who was crying aloud with hunger. They were poor folk and had no money to buy any milk. Suddenly they saw a beautiful she-goat in the compound. When an old woman approached the goat to milk it said: "God and Fatima sent me, because a distant relative of the child was one day a maid to Fatima." The goat stayed and nourished the child until it was needed no more.

There are many more such instances, when those who had served Fatima, or some relation of theirs, were given assistance, or had some special service done for them.

MIRACLES OF FATIMA. Miracles are always associated with religious and spiritual beings. Men and women who have attained perfection and purification of soul, which takes them nearer to their Creator and makes them His dear ones, can and do perform miracles. Similarly there were many miracles performed by Fatima. Some of them I shall mention here for the benefit of the readers.

Once in Mecca, fever in an epidemic form spread. People in thousands were laid up with it. The very best physicians in the land did their best to discover

the cause or to find some remedy for it, but all their efforts were of no avail. In despair they came to Fatima and implored her to pray to God to stop the disease. She told them not to worry and recited a prayer, which she said should be repeated by those suffering from fever and that on doing so the fever would leave them at once. They went away and told the sufferers, and more than five thousand people who were suffering from the malignant fever found themselves quite cured soon after repeating the verse.

On another occasion, a woman brought a child to Fatima. The poor child had been born blind and the woman begged Fatima to pray to God to restore the child's sight, as he was all that was left to her after the battle of Uhud. Fatima consoled the woman and told her not to grieve and that her child would soon be alright. She then gently touched the child's eyes with her thumbs and when she removed her hands from his face, his eyes were wide open and his sight had been restored.

The woman was besides herself with joy and being the widow of a very wealthy man, sent costly presents to Fatima in token of the human service done to her. Fatima, in order not to disappoint the woman, accepted the presents, but she did not keep them for herself. She gave them away to be used for the relief of other families who had been suffering losses in the battle.

There was a very rich Jew in Medina who was suffering from leprosy. He was once the leader of the

Jews in Medina and head of a very important Jewish clan. All that money could do was done. The very best of physicians were called at considerable expenses from all parts of the world. Physicians with their individual and united efforts were of no avail, and the malady of the Jew remained as persistent as before. The Jew and his relatives were in despair and did not know what to do. Some one then told him to go to Fatima and that her prayers would surely cure him. The Jew listened to what was said, but at first he was almost adamant and refused to go to a person whose father he said preached a religion so different from his own. Instead he sent for another very learned physician, who came from a very great distance. He did his best but his treatment too was of no avail. So seeing that efforts had failed, he at last turned to Fatima for help. When he presented himself at her door, she went out. Seeing him she at once knew who he was and told him that having once felt repugnant to come to her, he could not have done so now but seeing him in such distress, she said she would cure him, on condition that he would promise that he would stop usury. The Jew promised, whereupon Fatima gave him a pot of water and asked him to go home and bathe in it. The Jew did as he was told and immediately afterwards found himself completely cured. He was so greatly affected by this, that he at once gathered together the clan whose head he was and told them of the great miracle performed by Fatima. They too were greatly affected by it and all agreed with him to become Muslims. They then all went

together to Fatima and told her of their intention to join the faith. Fatima sent for Ali who performed the conversion ceremony. The cured Jew not only became a good and faithful Muslim, but he gave away all his wealth for the use of the Muslims in need.

One day a woman came to Fatima, with tears and sobs. She told her that her husband had gone on business some weeks ago and had not returned, though she had expected him back long before this. She said she had three small children in the house. She added that she had no food or money and that she really did not know what would happen to them if her husband did not return. She then begged Fatima to pray that no harm had befallen him on the way and that he would return to them safe and sound. Fatima gave the woman some food and told her to go back to the children and to return after two hours. The woman did as she was said. When she returned, Fatima told her that while she was praying, God spoke to her that the woman's husband had been beaten and robbed on his way back, and that he was lying in a serious condition in a little hut some miles away. The woman began to sob but Fatima told her not to waste time but to hurry to the spot. She then gave the woman a bottle of water and told her as soon as she saw her husband she was to sprinkle the water over him and he would immediately be well. She told the woman where the men had robbed her husband and hidden the bag of gold and silver. The woman hurried away, leaving the three children in Fatima's care. The next

day the woman and her husband returned. They were both over-joyed for not only had the water cured the man, but they had also got back all that had been robbed. They offered Fatima half the bag of gold and silver; Fatima refused, but she asked them to divide one bag of silver and one of gold among twelve blind beggars. This little act they most gratefully did. Another day when Fatima was on her way to the market, she met a lame boy. She stopped and spoke to him thus: "How is that you are in this sad condition, my boy?" and the boy replied, "It is the will of God that I am thus." Then Fatima said: "Do you not wish to be like other boys instead of having to use crutches?" and the boy replied: "It is the will of God that I am thus; who am I that I should grumble?" Fatima was surprised to hear such words coming from a little boy. She then asked him to come with her to the mosque. For some time they prayed side by side; then Fatima told the boy to lay aside his crutches and walk. The boy first hesitated, but at Fatima's second bidding, he did as he was told and to his immense joy he was able to walk quite well. So overjoyed was he that he threw himself at Fatima's feet and begged her to make him her slave; but Fatima told him to go home and if he wished to please her he should worship God always. The boy was, one day, a great man, but that did not make him break his promise to Fatima. He was always a very faithful follower of Islam and did much good in his time.

Some unbelievers one day went to the Holy Prophet and asked him if he could perform miracles. The Prophet replied that not only could he perform miracles, but

his daughter could also do so. The unbelievers, of course, did not believe it and said that if Fatima performed one miracle before their eyes, they would all become Mulims. The Prophet then told them to go to Fatima and see her powers for themselves. The unbelievers proceeded to the house of Fatima, taking with them six hard boiled eggs. Fatima, seeing them, at once knew what their errand was, but she asked them politely of what service she could be to them. The leader of the unbelievers said to her: "In this basket we have hard boiled eggs. If what people say of you is true then turn these six eggs into chickens." They looked at each other and smiled, believing that they would soon make Fatima humble before them. Fatima bade them enter and asked them to be seated. She also did the same. Taking the basket in her hands, she bent over it and murmured a few words of prayer; she then gave the basket back to them, and made them watch the eggs carefully. One by one the eggs cracked and opened, and in less than five minutes, there were six lovely little chickens in place of the hard boiled eggs. The unbelievers were astonished at this; they humbly asked Fatima's pardon, and not only did they turn Muslims but also made many of their friends and relatives Muslims as well.

The people of Medina who helped the Muslims are known as Ansar. Some of them were rich merchants who used to trade with coastal towns and other places in the interior. As it is already known, the fame of Fatima had spread far and wide, and penetrated most homes. Some of these merchants before embarking on long

trade journeys, laden with camels of merchandise, always made it a point of duty to come to Fatima for blessing before starting. One day, two brothers came to Fatima and she told them that the journey ahead would be very dangerous for them, for on their journey they would be surrounded by thieves, robbed of all their wealth and killed ; she, therefore, asked them to postpone it until an opportune time, but they said that they had to go without delay for they were due at a certain town on a particular date adding that if they failed to be there at the appointed time, they would lose by some thousands.

Fatima thought it over, and finally said that they might undertake the journey, but that they should go well armed and with enough men to be able to put up a fight with the thieves. They agreed to do this and began their journey.

Fatima had also told them the exact spot where they would encounter the thieves. On their journey, when they came to that place, they were very much frightened. Being night, they were compelled to camp there, and decided to keep a strong guard the whole night. The brothers themselves said they would take it in turn to keep awake with the batch of men on duty.

So it happened that at the time that the raid was supposed to take place, the elder brother was asleep in his tent. He dreamt that the whole caravan was besieged with thieves, that all their men had been

killed, all their wealth had been robbed and he and his brother were being murdered. With a piercing shriek, and shaking with cold fear, he jumped up out of bed to find to his amazement that all was quiet and nothing amiss. He, however, could not sleep any more and kept watch with his brother. Dawn at last appeared, and with that their fears vanished. They then continued their journey and completed it in safety. On reaching Medina they went to see Fatima and told her that what she had foretold did not happen after all. She asked them if they did not have such and such a dream. They said : "Yes and at the very-spot that the robbing should have taken place." Fatima then told them that after their departure she had prayed to God for their safety and through her intercession God enacted in a dream, that which was destined to have happened in reality. They were very grateful : they thanked her and gave her costly presents. These she at once gave to the Prophet for the use of the poor.

Although there are many more miracles performed by Fatima, for want of space I shall relate one more here and then proceed to another chapter.

One evening, Husain, who had gone out to play with his friends, returned looking rather distressed. Fatima seeing the child's face asked him what the matter was and Husain replied that while he and his companions were playing on the banks of the river, they came across an old woman sitting at the edge of the

water and sobbing most bitterly and that it made him sad to see any one in such trouble. Fatima asked Husain to accompany her to the river, for she would like to do something to help the poor woman.

When they reached the spot, the woman was still there, crying and sobbing as though her heart was broken. Fatima, laying a hand on her shoulder begged her to tell her the reason for her sorrow. The old woman asked Fatima to sit beside her and unfolded her sad story. She said: "Fifteen years ago, my only son was to be married to a girl on the other side of the river. The ceremony took place and all went well and the day soon arrived for us to return to our own place. We hired a large boat to be able to contain the whole marriage party. With much singing and laughter we started the voyage across. Just as we were half the way, the river commenced to swell, there was a strong current and in a few minutes the boat capsized. The bride and bride-groom and all the members of the party were drowned with the exception of myself. I clung to a passing tree trunk which took me to the bank, and thus I was saved. For fifteen long years, I have been alone in the world, and every day at sunset, I come to this spot and cry for my dear lost ones." Tears ran down Fatima's cheeks as she heard this sad tale. She stood up and started praying while the old woman watched her with wide eyes. Fifteen minutes passed and nothing happened. Fatima waited for another five minutes and still nothing happened. She then raised her eyes to Heaven and

Cried: "O God ! you have refused to hear my prayers. What have I done to deserve this ?" She then heard the voice of an angel saying: " Have patience. The bodies of those drowned fifteen years ago were eaten up by fish, and those fish by other fish, and so on. Therefore it will take some time to gather the pieces and put them together, so have patience." And Fatima felt ashamed of herself for having been in such haste. She sat down beside the old woman to wait, and in half an hour just as the moon began to rise, the boat with every member of the marriage party on it, was seen crossing the river. The old woman could not believe her own eyes, only when she saw her son alight and approach her with outstretched arm did she realize it was all true and not a mere dream. With a wild cry of joy she rushed forward and embraced her son. She then turned, ready to fall on her knees and thank Fatima for what she had done. But Fatima and Husain had quietly gone.



CHAPTER XVI.

THE DEATH OF THE HOLY PROPHET
AND ITS EFFECT ON FATIMA.

ALAS ! everyone who is born is to die, be he a humble slave, a daily worker, a king or a prophet there is no escape for him. There is no escape for any one - all big and small alike - have to pass through that portal to reap what they have sown in this world Birth and death are no mysteries but realities and should be treated as such. Those who ignore this vital fact do the worst thing imaginable. They forget that there is nothing without purpose and indulge for the living moment.

All should realize that God created them; they were born and there was a purpose behind that fact. They were not born merely to waste time in the pleasure of flesh. By all means indulge, but only to the extent which is healthy and they should not abuse the purpose of creation. Whatever the religion of a person be, the purpose of creation is the same, i. e. the attainment of spiritual perfection.

The courses prescribed by all religions lead to the same end. If there happens to be any defect anywhere it is not the fault of the religion, but rather lies in those in whose hands it has become a power to wield their influence.

The theory of the reincarnation of soul preached by the Hindu philosophers may be ridiculous, but the idea behind it is certainly not. It is an indisputable fact that promises of a reward alone do not make a man do the right thing, but if coupled with the promises, there are threats for infringement, man, in majority of cases, is bound to follow the right thing. Therefore reincarnation of soul is a threat that if one fails to live up to a certain standard, one should expect to be re-born in a lower strata of Animal Kingdom, as a punishment for the misdeeds of the previous life. There is no harm in believing in a thing which keeps away from doing wrong.

Again, the threats of Hell preached from the Christian pulpits and Muslim mosques, are another axiom to keep one in the right path. Therefore, it behoves every man to think of the life after death. Certainly he knows that there is a life and therefore it should be his duty to work to achieve that. His life should be an ideal one.

Everyone born into the world has to die once. No one can escape it. It is most painful when a person dies leaving behind some one most dear, who is left to face this world, full of hardships alone. A father's death is always cruel, especially in a case when he leaves behind a young child or children. His position, his power and his influence which have guarded his dear ones during his life snap, so to say, with his death. Say the one left behind is a young

boy, he becomes capable of anything in the eyes of the world, his slightest fault is magnified and talked about, he is ridiculed and cut. This treatment naturally affects the growing child a good deal. It tells on his character and mars it. He grows into a sullen bitter man. He has faith and trust in no one and least of all no confidence whatever in himself. Is it any wonder then if such a man ends in utter failure? This is usually the case when the father had enemies who were only kept under restraint owing to his influence. But when he dies, they take advantage of the helpless child and vent their anger on him. In such a case, a father's death is, indeed, the saddest tragedy in the world.

The foregoing was just a prelude. I will now refer to the death of the Holy Prophet.

The Prophet had no doubt succeeded in his mission of spreading Islam, but he had not much success in eradication some of their irrational characteristics of the Arabs.

The different Quraish clans who had bowed to this man of the Hashimite family, had not forgotten the ravage of the battles that had been fought against them. Their hearts were crying for the revenge which they had sworn at their very first defeat at the hands of the Muslims and which they had renewed at the subsequent ones. That thirst for revenge had not been quenched and they were abiding by to strike the blow.

In the 10th year of Hijra, the Prophet proceeded to Mecca for Haj (pilgrimage). Before embarking on

this, the Prophet had told every one that if they wanted to ask anything about the rites and performances of Haj they should do so, because, he told them, this would be his last Haj. All his friends and relations in Medina accompanied him on this occasion. Besides that, Muslims all over were informed that this was to be his last Haj and all should do their best to attend it. The fact that such a great number of Muslims attended the Haj was not only due to the fact that the Prophet had said it was to be his last one, but also because they expected him to leave important instructions for the future conduct and guidance of the Muslims and also to announce his successor.

The Haj was over and the journey back to Medina had begun, and when on the way as he moved the Prophet halted and said he wished to wait for all the other Muslims returning from Mecca. When all the Muslims had gathered, he addressed them, sketching the brief history of Islam and telling them how the success of Islam could be continued and increased. In the end he told the people that he would leave behind him two great things, which he wished the Muslims of all times to respect and to obey always. One thing he said was the Holy Quran and the other his progeny. Then he blessed those present ; this done, they were allowed to proceed home and the Prophet himself went to Medina.

Soon after his arrival in Medina which ended, after two months and a half, in his death in the year

632 A. D. During the last illness an incident happened which is a very controversial subject in Islam. It began with the fact that one day the Prophet asked for paper, pen and ink and said that he wished to write something which would be a guide for all Muslims to follow. Omar who happened to be present prohibited to accede to his request, believing that the Prophet having been ill for so long, and almost in a state of coma, might not know what he was writing and might leave something behind which might be the cause of friction in Islam. To an observer this incident may not appear to be true. For it is an established fact that the Prophet knew neither how to write, nor how to read, but one can never tell that at this moment God might have given him the power to write, so that he would leave behind a written message to all Muslims for all time. The controversy rises from the fact that the Shias, the followers of Ali, believe that the message the Prophet wished to leave was to nominate his successor and to decide the question of succession once for all. But Sunnies say this belief is rather sceptical, because if that had been the case it would have been decided and made clear in the Quran especially when a person sees that affairs of lesser importance were dealt with and decided in the Holy Quran.

Further Sunnies say that it cannot be denied that soon after the Prophet's flight from Mecca to Medina Islam had secured a temporal status, and from this time to the death of the Prophet, the difference was ten years and surely if God had wished that the successor of the prophet should be Ali and his progeny he would have ordained that in the Quran and settled the matter.

As for my opinion on the action of Omar in prohibiting the supply of pen and paper, it is rather too late to offer any remarks. The incident took place 1300 years ago, and therefore, as the exact affair cannot be truly apprehended, it is futile either to blame or extol him. He did a thing at a certain time and under certain existing circumstances, and as such neither that time nor those circumstances can now be truly appreciated after such a long flight of time, I would ask both the schools of thoughts to put an end to these little affairs that are a big obstacle in the way of the united Islam.

The advance of science and the evolution of the theory of state have rather shown us all that not only sectarianism but that even nationalism have become stale. Only those people who think in terms of internationalism can hope to last in the world, while we Muslims are still thinking in terms of sectarianism, whose further continuance would prove a drastic and tragic end.

It was only by abolishing sectarianism that the Turks survived from the effects of the treaty of Severe. It is this sectarianism only which prevents India from putting up a united front when her whole future is in the balance, and threatened to be brought down piecemeal by those whom their very sectarianism has given upper hand.

Syed Zaker Hasan, the author of 'Seerate-i-Fatima' writes that the Holy Prophet fell ill in the house of Fatima, and that he was there until his death

while Sayed Awlad Haidar writes in his book 'AZ-ZUHRA' that the Prophet fell ill in the house of Umm-ul-Momineen and in the beginning of his illness Fatima used to attend on him all day, but later, when he became worse, he used to be with him the whole time until he died. Both of these are Shia writers, but Zaker Hasan in his efforts to put Fatima upon a pedestal, did not stop from misrepresenting fact. As a matter of fact, how little does it matter whether the Prophet died in Fatima's house or in the house of any one else. I should not have mentioned these two books, for they are written sorely for the illiterate and the ignorant, but I should like to point out that it is books of this kind, which should be stopped from being published, because they are full of venom which is keeping the Muslims of the two different schools of thought bitterly divided. If I am asked, I will say that the cause of this state of Islam and Muslims is the army of the prejudiced Mallas ; these are growing fat and rich on the superstition and ignorance of the masses. It is just they and their diabolical methods which keep alight the smouldering fires of hatred and conflict between the two sects.

They will not let the poor out of their influence whatever be the cost, and being best experts of confidence, trick and mob psychology, they play on their imagination with all the supposed grievances and outrages committed in the name of sectarianism, but they forget the fact that they are upholding the very same sectarianism themselves. Remove these and give oppor-

tunities for better and wider education, you will soon find a united Muslim nation growing.

All that has happened in the past why keep the old fires going now? Why not put them out entirely and forget them? People who keep within the precincts of the past can hardly hope to make their mark in the world and as conditions are today, it would not be wide the mark to say that they will not survive.

Time and again it has been impressed on one, from examples all over the world, that a nation isolated is bound to fall, much less different sections of a group.

These things should not be made religious belief, no more than their right place should be assigned to them and that it is history and ancient story. The Romans in their height of power had conquered parts of England and had ruled English men at one time, but today, when they are two different empires, we do not see any enmity on the part of England towards the Romans, they are friends. People severed themselves from Catholicism, the conflict lasted with bitter tragedies and heavy human losses, and though today they are, by no means, consolidated, yet we do not see them at daggers drawn at each other. They are busy in their sphere of activity; 'live and let others live' is their motto and should be the motto of every one.

One should not allow some slight difference of opinion embitter one and make one a life long enemy. Books are written by members of each sect and should not be written so as to bring about a wider point of view, but to stifle whatever there is in any one of them.

Shame betide us, we call ourselves Muslims and followers of the Holy Prophet and yet do we today try to follow in his footsteps? Has he not taught us by word, deed and example that to forgive is divine? Have we, in any way, followed it? No! most certainly not; we pick upon something that has happened 1300 years ago and quarrel over it and divided our community into different sects. Is it not wiser to forget and forgive differences of opinion to unite into one big nation ready to face any obstacles and conquer. Should we all not bear in mind that old proverb—we should be one big brotherhood—instead of dividing ourselves into different groups for ever at loggerheads at each other.

Take the case of Ali. One day in a combat, he got the better of the enemy. Ali gripped him between his legs and raised his sword ready to cut off his head. The sword was just about to finish its task, when the man spat on Ali's face. Ali reddened with anger, one would think another second and the man's head would have rolled to the ground, but that was not what Ali did. Instead of putting an end to the man's life, immediately he got up and raised the

man with him saying. "I shall spare your life, because now that you have spat on me, the quarrel has become a personal matter, and therefore, I do not consider it right to kill one in anger." Yet the quarrel in the beginning was just a personal matter and we have been nursing hatred for the last century and more and heaping abuse on one another. I ask you has it been paying ? Has it helped ? Has it altered facts ? Can it bring back the time that has past, for us to start right over again ? No ! nothing can be done, then why all this hubhub and madness ? Is'nt wise to end it and behave in a sensible manner ?" Such was the action of Ali and yet we do not try to follow his example.

An educated Hindu, even after a long sojourn in the west, sticks to his religion. But one sees that a good many educated Muslims seem to turn from their religion. They seem to have no use for it. An educated Muslim believes in God and the rest, he calls himself a Muslim, but his religion is no consolation to him, because he finds it in the hands of those who have made it a pawn on the chess board of their power and vanity. He does not like a religion which throws ashes on those dead and gone centuries ago, he wants to believe in Islam essentially for the moment and future.

He knows well enough there is a bad chapter in the history of every big movement, but he wants to forget that and concentrate only on the best of it and to follow its example.

This then should be our aim ; we should join together and smother the feelings that have been kept at high pitch all this time. It is a Himalayan task and it would only be possible to find it working in the next generation, but this should not deter us from our determination. The whole future of Islam depends on this and now is the time to start. To begin with, tolerance should be preached.

This chapter was to be on the death of the Holy Prophet, but thus far I have written about the condition of Muslims today. I shall now take up the thread of events from where I left off. I have mentioned thus far, that the Prophet went on his last pilgrimage and soon after his return to Medina he fell ill. Fatima spent most of her time nursing him. One day soon after he fell ill. The Prophet called Fatima to him. He asked her to bend down and then whispered something to her. When she heard the first word, tears trickled down her eyes and she gave a sob, but the next minute as he continued speaking, she began to smile. Aiesha who was present asked Fatima what it was that the Prophet told her, that made her cry and smile at the same time. But Fatima shook her head and said she could not tell her then as it was a secret. One day, after the death of the Prophet Aiesha remembered this incident and again asked Fatima about it and she replied, that the tears came to her eyes first because the Prophet had told her that he was going to die soon and she smiled the next minute because he told her that she would join him soon after in Heaven.

The days of the Prophet's illness were the saddest days in the life of Fatima. Her sorrow has been well

described by the author of the "Rozat-el-ahbab". He says : "After two months of illness, the Holy Prophet's last day on earth arrived. It was a cloudy and dismal day. Since morning the Prophet had been in a state of coma. Fatima sat beside his bed silently shedding tears. She had not left him for many days. The house was silent as grave—every one quietly crying, for they felt that the Prophet would not be with them much longer. Suddenly, as the day was on, the silence was broken by the voice of a man calling out and asking permission to come in and see the Prophet. Fatima replied that the Prophet was seriously ill and not in a condition to see any one.

The man did not heed her words but repeated his request in a very loud tone. This disturbed the Prophet who opened his eyes and asked Fatima who was calling. Fatima had to tell him that it was some one asking permission to come in and see him. The Prophet then smiled; he drew Fatima to him and told her that the man was none other than the angel of Death who had been sent to come and take his soul away. He then asked Fatima to let him in.

Fatima, with tears streaming down her cheeks, opened the door and asked the man to come in. The man rather angel approached the Holy Prophet. After greeting him, he said that God had sent him to say that all arrangements for his reception in Heaven had been made, that everything was ready and awaiting his pleasure.

The Prophet then wished all those present 'GOOD-BYE'. Taking Fatima's hand in his, he turned to the angel of Death and told him if it was God's wish, for him to do his work and release his soul. The angel did as he was requested and the Holy Prophet (May peace be on him) closed his eyes and peacefully passed away.



للسید الخواص ملا کاظم الازری من هائیته المشهورة

وکذا اخبر النبی بآن الله * یرضی سب حافه لوضاها
 اشکر الله اذنی اتوالی * عترة المصطفی و اشنی عداها
 فاطقا بالصراب لا ارعب لا * عداء فی حبهم ولا اخشاها
 مظہراً فضلهم بعزم ذاتهم * بلغت فی ودادهم منتهها

The above are a few verses taken from the innumerable verses in praise of Fatima by Sheikh Mulla Kadhim Alazri from his well-known poetry.

"The Prophet had told me thus: God is pleased with those who pleases her (Fatima.) And I thank God that I am the follower of the progeny of the Prophet and I am deadly against their enemies.

I always speak the truth and I fear not enemies for their (Ahlul-Bait's) love, I ardently and passionately express their excellence, and I am lost in their love."

"Allah only desires to take away the uncleanness from you, O people of the household! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying." Quran, xxxiii : 33.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

حدیث کسائے

روی عن فاطمة الزهراء سلام الله عليها انها قالت دخل علىي ابی رسول الله صلی الله علیہ و آله فی بعض الايام وقال لی يا فاطمة افی لا جد فی بدھی ضعفاً فقلت له اعیدک بالله يا ابیت من الضعف فقال يا فاطمة ائتینی بالکسائے الیمانی و غطینی به قالت فاطمة سلام الله علیها فاتیتہ بالکسائے و غطیتہ به و صرت انظر الیہ و اذا وجھه يتلا لا نوراً کانه البدر فی لیلۃ تمامۃ و کمالہ قالت فاطمة سلام الله علیها فما كانت الا ساعۃ و اذا ہو لدی الحسن قد اقبل و قال السلام عليك يا اماه فقلت عليك السلام يا قرة عینی و ثمرة نوادی فقال لی يا اماه افی اشم عندک رائحة طبیۃ کانها رائحة جدی رسول الله صلی الله علیہ و آله فقلت نعم ان جدک نائیم تحت الکسائے فاقبل الحسن نحو الکسائے وقال السلام عليك يا جدہ السلام عليك يا رسول الله اتاذن لی ان ادخل معک تحت هذ الکسائے فقال له نعم قد اذفت لک فدخل الحسن علیه

السلام معه تحت الكسأء قالت فاطمة سلام الله عليها فما كانت
 الا ساعة و اذا بولدى الحسين قد اقبل وقال السلام عليك يا امهه
 فقلت و عليك السلام يا قرة عيني و ثمرة فوادى فقال يا امهه انى
 اشم عندك رائحة طيبة كافها رائحة جدى رسول الله صلى الله
 عليه و آله فقلت فعم ان جدك و اخاك ذائمان تحت
 هذا الكسأء فدفى الحسين عليه السلام نحو الكسأء وقال السلام
 عليك يا جدأه السلام عليك يا من اختاره الله اناذن لى ان اكون
 معكما تحت هذا الكسأء فقال له فعم قد اذنت لك يا حسين
 فدخل معهما الحسين تحت الكسأء قالت فاطمة عليها السلام
 فما كانت الا ساعة و اذا بآبى الحسن على عليه السلام قد اقبل
 فقال السلام عليك يا بنت رسول الله فقلت و عليك السلام يا
 امير المؤمنين فقال يا فاطمة انى اشم عندك رائحة طيبة كافها
 رائحة اخى و اين عمى رسول الله فقالت فعم ها هو مع ولديك
 ذائمن تحت هذا الكسأء فاقبل على عليه السلام نحو الكسأء وقال
 السلام عليك يا رسول الله السلام عليك من اختاره الله اناذن
 لى ان ادخل معكم تحت هذا الكسأء قال نعم قد اذنت لك
 فدخل على معهم تحت الكسأء قالت فاطمة سلام الله عليها ثم
 اقبلت نحو الكسأء و قلت السلام عليك يا ابتهاء السلام عليك يا
 رسول الله اناذن لى ان ادخل معكم تحت الكسأء قال نعم
 قد اذنت لك فدخلت معهم تحت الكسأء قالت فاطمة فلما
 اكتملنا جميعاً تحت الكسأء قال الله اعلموا يا ملائكتى و سكان
 سماءاتى و عزتى و جلالى انى ما خلقت سماء مبنية ولا ارضاً

مدحية ولا قمراً منيراً ولا شمساً مضيئة ولا فلكاً يدور ولا بحراً
 يجري ولا فلكاً تسرى إلا في محبة هؤلاء الخمسة الذين هم تحت
 الكساء فقال جبرئيل عليه السلام يا رب ومن تحت الكساء قال
 الله تعالى هم أهله بيت النبوة ومعدن الرسامة وهم فاطمة وابوها و
 بعلها وبنوها فقال جبرئيل يا رب أتاذن لي أن أهبط إلى الأرض
 لا كون معهم سادساً فقال الله تعالى نعم قد أذنت لك فهبط الامين
 جبرئيل واقبل نحو الكساء وقال السلام عليك يا رسول الله السلام
 عليك يا من اختار الله أن الله عزوجل يقوئك السلام ويخصك
 بالتحية والكرام ويقول لك وعزتي وجلالي أني ما خلقت
 سماء مبنية ولا أرضاً مدحية ولا قمراً منيراً ولا شمساً مضيئة ولا
 فلكاً يدور ولا بحراً يجري ولا فلكاً تسرى إلا لجلكم ومحبتكم و
 قد أذن لي أن أدخل معكم تحت هذا الكساء فهل تأذن لي أنت
 يا رسول الله أن أدخل معكم فقال قد أذنت لك فدخل جبرئيل
 معهم تحت الكساء وقال لهم أن الله عزوجل قد أوحى إليكم
 يقول إنما يريد الله ليذهب عنكم الرجس أهل البيت ويطهرونكم
 تطهيراً فقال على عليه السلام يا رسول الله أخبرنى ما الجلوس
 هذا تحت الكساء من الفضل عند الله تعالى فقال النبي والذى يعذنى
 بالحق نبياً واصطفاني بالرسالة ذجياً ما ذكر خبرنا هذا في مصحف
 من محفال أهل الأرض وفيه جم من شيعتنا ومحبينا إلا وذلت
 عليهم الرحمة وحفت بهم المنكحة واستغفرت لهم إلى أن يتفرقوا
 فقال على إذا والله فرقنا وسعدنا وكذاك شيعتنا فازوا وسعدوا

و رب الكعبة فقال رسول الله والذى بعثنى بالحق نبياً واصطفانى بالرسالة نجياً ما ذكر خبرنا هذا فى مصحف من محافل اهل الارض وفيه جميع من شيعتنا وفيهم مهوم لا و فرج الله همه ولا مغموم الا وكشف الله غمه ولا طالب حاجة الا و قضى الله حاجته فقال على اذاً والله فزنا و سعدنا و كذلك فازوا و سعدوا فى الدفيا والآخرة -



عن على عليه السلام ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآلله وسلم قال اما نزلت هذه الاية « الا بذكرة الله تطمئن القلوب » قال ذلك من احب الله ورسوله و اهل بيته صادقاً غير كاذب -
(اخرجه ابوبكر بن مروديه)

عن الحسن بن علي (عليهما السلام) قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآلله وسلم لكل شيئى اساس و اساس الاسلام حب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآلله وسلم و حب اهل بيته -
(اخرجه البخارى والسيوطى فى احياء الميت)

عن ابن عباس رضى الله عنهمما قال : « فنزلت هذه الاية - قل لا اسألكم عندي اجرأ الا المودة فى القربي - قالوا من قرابتك هؤلاء الذين و جبنا علينا مودتهم ؟ قال : - على و فاطمة و ابنها هما (اخرجه احمد و ابن ابي حاتم والطبراني وانعاكم والد يلمى)

مدح حضرت خاتون جنت

(از عالی جناب سید افور حسین صاحب آرزو لکھنوی)

بطھا کی زمین خود ہی - اب غیرت جنت ہے
افسیئہ حورا کی یہ جائے ولادت ہے
کیا مصحف ناطق کی - پاکیزہ یہ صورت ہے
اک حجت حق خود بھی - جسکی ہر اک آیت ہے
تسلیم کی خوگر کو - خدمت ہی سے عظمت ہے
یہ خادمہ باری - مخدومہ امت ہے
زینت میں خجل اس سے - صد خلعت عظمت ہے
جس صبر کی چادر میں - پیوند قناعت ہے
خود فخر فسب کو ہے - اس نسل گرامی پر
یہ سیدۂ عالم - پیشاد سیادت ہے
ہے مصحف ناطق میں - یہ شان خرزوں ایسی
جس طرح کہ قرآن میں تطہیر کی آیت ہے
تہامے بادب آکر وہ دامن معصوم
کر لنظر طہارت کو - معنی کی ضرورت ہے
رہتی ہے کنیزی میں - ہر وقت عدالت بھی
نفس سے ذرا پوچھو - جو حاضر خدمت ہے

جبریل قسم کھالیں - خود وحی الہی کی
کس سر کے لئے چادر - تطہیر کی آیت ہے
کب عالم فسوں میں - ملتی ہے نظیر اس کی
تعظیم کو باپ اللہ - بیتی کی یہ عظمت ہے
بہر لغت عصمت - یہ دختر پیغمبر
گہ صورت معنی ہے - گہ معنی صورت ہے

جس شان کی بھی بھی نہی - ویسا ہی ملا شوہر
اک ملکہ عصمت ہے - اک شاہ ولایت ہے
کھلائے پسر دوذون - اولاد پیغمبر کی
حاصل اسی دختر کو - فرزند کی عظمت ہے
بیتی ہے پیغمبر کی - مان کیا رہ اماموں کی
اس عطر نبوت میں - خوشبوئے امامت ہے

اے آرزو آنکھوں ہیں - خورشید کی بھی خیرہ
ہان نور جلالت ہی - خود حاجب صورت ہے



HADIS (TRADITION) OF KISA.

The following is the translation in verses of the above Hadis, contributed by the late Syed Ahmad Ali Mohani, B.A., to the "Muslim Review" Lucknow. I reproduce the same, here instead of the- translation in prose.

One day the Holy Prophet of God,
Visited his beloved daughter,
"O Fatimah ! I feel fatigued," said he,
" Cover me with a blanket."

Fatimah complied and saw,
Her Father's noble countenance,
Shining like the full moon, bright.

Presently, Hasan her beloved son,
Greeted her and said, "O mother !
I smell a sweet scent
Like that of my grandfather,
The Lord's Apostle."

Said Fatimah, " Yes my darling son,
Your grandfather is resting here."

Hasan, then, towards the Prophet turned
And said, " Peace on you grandfather dear,
May I within the blanket come."

"I do permit thee," was the answer,
And Hasan inside the blanket went.

Then, came Husain and paid respects,
And was similarly admitted.

Then, came Ali, their revered father.
"Blessings and peace on you, O Prophet !
O Chosen one of God !" said he,
"May I within the blanket come."

"You are welcome," replied the Prophet,
And Ali entered within.

Then Fatimah approached and said,
"Peace on you O Father dear !
May I within the blanket come."

"Fruit of my heart, I permit thee,"
Replied the Apostle of God,
And Fatimah too entered.

When all were gathered, the Prophet prayed,
"O Lord ! these are my Ahlul Bait,
Therefore, be pleased to make them free
Of each and every impurity."

No sooner was the prayer o'vr
Then Gabriel came with word from God ;
"O Prophet ! the Lord doth send you greetings,
And swears by His Majesty and Glory,

That he did not create,
The heaven, the earth, the sun, the moon,
Nor caused the spheres and ships to move,
But for your sake and for your love.

And sends you word O Ahlul Bait,
That it hath been His changeless will,
To put away all filthiness from you,
And make you pure as you deserve."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAST DAYS OF FATIMA.

THE two important matters after the death of the Prophet which concerned Fatima were the question of the Caliphate and that of the property of Fidak, and these two have been set down in detail in the previous chapter. I must, before passing on to the events which culminated in the death of Fatima, say that in the previous Chapter I have tried to be impartial to both sects. I have taken the facts from the books of both, the Sunnis and the Shias, and have attempted to draw conclusions on a more rationalistic basis than a religious basis. I know fully well that statements of mine will not hurt either the Sunnis or the Shias, whereas generally if a Shiah is writing the life of Fatima, it will be that he will write nothing but what is the Shiah belief, and heap ridicule on the Sunnis, and *vice versa*. It is said that it has not been possible to say with certainty which set of facts is true, because none of the contemporary historians of that time have written an impartial account of the events. Modern European writers have passed over these events as if they were of no consequence and were petty jealousies of the rival sects. Even the same incident has been narrated in various ways by the Sunnies and the Shias among themselves that it becomes well nigh impossible to arrive at the truth. I think, therefore, it would be best to suspend judgment so far as this chapter of Muslim

history is concerned. Fatima lived but a very short time after the death of her father and therefore there is nothing of much consequence to be recorded except what has already been done in the previous Chapters. One fact, however, remains prominent, and that is that she was the best daughter, wife and mother. Any father would be proud to have such a daughter, any husband such a wife, and any son such a mother. Throughout we find her the most considerate being. She always placed her father's, husband's and children's wishes uppermost. She had no thought for her own self, but loved them all. She was so deep in her love towards them that she had even endangered her life on many occasions, as mentioned before.

The Prophet had always spoken of her as the best of daughters. The husband had nothing but praise for her. The children were overwhelmed with her kindness. Her life in fact was that of a saint, and so faultless in all its details that one wonders if she was really divine or belonged to the earth. God was her bed-rock foundation on which all her actions were founded, some of which were such that the bravest of men would have trembled to do.

Before closing the final chapter, I would again like to point out that our women should take a lesson from the life of Fatima, and try to follow in her footsteps. The census report just published dealing with the incidence of tuberculosis says that among the victims the greater number are the Muslim women. Imagine the future

of a community where mothers, instead of being healthy so as to bring forth healthy children, are, most of them, ailing from a malady which can be transmitted. If no steps are taken to check its progress it will one day result in the extinction of the Muslims at least from India. The reason attributed to the present state of things is the purdah system.

From the various anecdotes recorded in this book it is patent that no one can observe purdah better than Fatima could. She observed it in the literal and strict sense of the word, but what we observe to-day is purdah in its most degraded form. To us it means seclusion of women within the four walls of the house which is incorrect. We have seen that Fatima used to go out and yet observed strict purdah. We should do the same.

It is essential for the maintenance of health that fresh air and sunshine should fall on the human body. The houses, most of the Muslims live in, are close one-room tenements. The whole family consisting of mother in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law and children live in that one room, which serves for bed room, drawing room, kitchen and everything else. That people cannot afford to live in better houses is not their fault, but certainly it is their fault if they do not go out of such abodes to get what they lack, namely, fresh air and sunshine. Men do go out, and that is the reason why many of them have escaped the disease, but women, thanks to the faulty notions of purdah, are not

allowed to go out. This is a very serious matter, in fact more distressing and fatal than the political weakness of the community. I hope it will be realised that the purdah which Fatima observed was the truest purdah and that the same will be adopted in the community in the place of the one now observed.

Muslim women are far too backward so far as literacy is concerned. A woman who is not literate cannot have that broad-mindedness which goes to make one a real member of the community. Their horizon is narrowed by their seclusion, their intelligence is warped by the customs of ages. They are like dumb driven cattle. It is a pity to see how ignorant they are of the fact that a mother plays a very important part in the making of the nation. It is absolutely vital that the children she brings forth should be mentally and bodily normal and healthy. We shall cite a case which will illustrate the importance of this argument. Germany has enacted that before marriage one should be medically examined to see if one is healthy and intelligent enough to bring healthy and intelligent children into the world. Those who are found deficient are sterilised, so that they may not bring a diseased child into the world. A nation that takes the trouble to look after its mothers is bound to be among the greatest in the world.

Therefore, what I say is that men should study the life of Fatima carefully to see what is necessary for a mother to enjoy, and the women should study how

best to follow the principles and get the privileges she upholds as belonging to women. It is a nation's birth-right to be self protective and self-sufficient.

To achieve this we must cease to think individually and must think collectively. For instance, one should not stop doing a thing because it is not very useful to him, but one should see how far it will affect humanity as a whole, and if one finds that the ultimate result would be better for the good of the community, then alone one should do it, and otherwise not. Anything that is done, said or written should be for the greatest good of the many. I hope sincerely that we will soon realise that we are losing by being false to the ideals of Islam, and that we will take steps to build a nation which will win for itself what its predecessors won 1300 years ago.

Once again, before I end this, I entreat both my Shiah and Sunni brethren to tolerate each other for God's sake and for the sake of the future of Islam. Those who are grown up may not forget this sad chapter of Islam, but they can see that the causes which led to such a state of things are avoided by those who are children to-day and who will be men tomorrow. We have lost much through strife. Let us now make an attempt at least to win back a millionth part of our former glory by unity.

THE END.

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